

CHRISTIAN COURIER

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**Runner conference reflects
on his legacy p. 10**

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58th year of publication

Religion in the public square

Sue Careless

MONTREAL, Quebec — Modernity was thought to lead to a secular state where religion would become so personal and privatized as to be virtually irrelevant to public life. It would have no real influence in the public square. Now just the opposite seems to be occurring. Globally, religion is gaining clout, and how we order our lives together politically, needs to again take into account the spiritual.

So argued many of the speakers at the recent conference, "Pluralism, Religion and Public Policy," held at McGill University, Montreal, October 9-11.

We should not have to check our deepest beliefs

Many an academic conference takes place in an ivory tower but the McGill conference had on its agenda such panel discussions as "Politics and Religion after [the destruction of] the World Trade Centre" and "When group rights conflict."

"We should not have to check our deepest beliefs at the vestibule before entering the public square," argued Fr. Richard John Neuhaus, author of *The Naked Public*



SUE CARELESS

Speaker Richard John Neuhaus

Square: Religion and Democracy in America. (See related article page 2.)

Many speakers agreed with Neuhaus, but warned that even if religious concerns were raised in public discourse and public policy-making, no one should expect a consensus, either among various religious groups or between religious and non-religious communities.

The international gathering attracted three hundred scholars, Jewish, Christian, Muslim and secular, and was jointly sponsored by the Faculty of Religious Studies at McGill and the Centre for Cultural Renewal based in Ottawa.

A Muslim prince and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada were among the many distinguished speakers who addressed the colloquium. There were also eminent philosophers, theologians, scientists and ethicists at the podium.

Prince El Hassan bin Talal, the brother of Jordan's late King Hussein, was surrounded by heavy security as he spoke warmly and thoughtfully on the panel regarding politics and religion after the destruction of the World Trade Centre.

Clash of cultures

The prince believed that "Freedom without responsibility ceases to be freedom." He supported "consensus and pluralism and what they carry with them in responsibilities." Instead of a "clash of cultures and civilizations" (buzz words since the September 11th terrorist attacks) he cited the 600

years that Jews, Christians and Muslims traded peaceably from Morocco to Malabar. He believed such a model of cultural co-existence and cooperation between civilizations is still possible today.

Prince El Hassan is, however, concerned about the "absence of legitimate dialogue between organizations that claim to represent our faith" and said that whenever he engages in interfaith discussions, he is accused at home of "syncretism." Yet he maintained the need for "the noble art of conversation."

Can there be any consensus?

And conversation there was at McGill. Speaker after speaker raised fundamental questions: Can there be any consensus in a pluralist society regarding the common good, the dignity of the person, the equality of the person or human rights? What role should religion play in determining their content?

Is faith a cause of exclusion for citizens of secular societies? What is the role of religion in today's political and social life, as well as in the shaping of our laws, medicine

and science?

Liberal democracies, with the exception of Japan, were rooted in Judeo-Christian tradition, but how much should religion play in their future?

Is the space for religion shrinking in public life and thus needs to be better protected (or, some would argue, eliminated completely) or is it growing and needs to be better accommodated?

Desecularization

Canada is becoming an increasingly secular state, although not as secular a society as some might think. Yet globally, there is a resurgence of religion, and the world, except for Western Europe, is becoming desecularized.

"How we order our lives together, whether we are theists or atheists, we all belong at the table," declared Neuhaus in a public lecture attended by several Muslim women in head scarves. "The table belongs to all of us not just the faith-free. All should be warmly welcomed. All presumptions have to be laid on the table. People need to feel confident that they can make their arguments from moral and religious convictions."

Researchers question the value of immigration

Alan Doerksen

TORONTO — Is immigration a good thing? A recent article by Daniel Stoffman in *Report on Business* questions the value of immigration for Canada. He strongly criticizes Canada's immigration policy, focusing especially on the economic effects and he questions what he sees as widely-believed reasons to support immigration. Stoffman has also recently published the book *Who Get's In: What's Wrong with Canada's Immigration Program — and How to Fix It*.

'Two false beliefs'

Stoffman questions what he

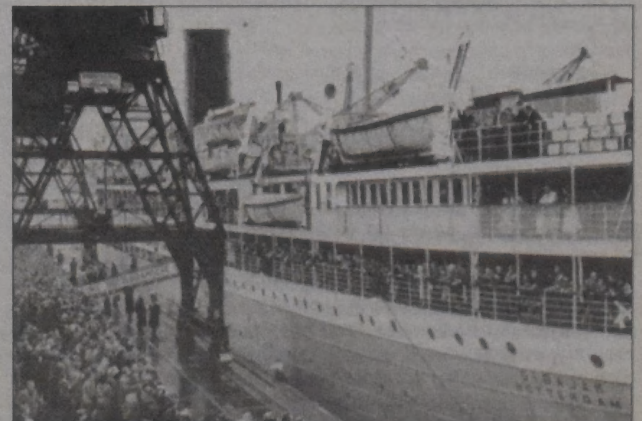
calls "two false beliefs: that the economic prosperity and the demographic survival of Canada both depend on immigration." He argues that economic growth in Canada does not depend on immigration: "Nor does Canada need, now or in future, a massive influx of young immigrants to support retired baby boomers."

Stoffman looks at the fact that Canadian families are having fewer babies, which could result in a declining population without further immigration. He points out that even with our current fertility rate of 1.5 children per Canadian woman, if immigration remains at current levels, Canada's popula-

tion will increase until 2040 and then stabilize at about 37 million. Stoffman interprets some major newspapers' viewpoint of recent census figures as reflecting "the idea that the absence of population growth, or even a slower rate of population growth, inevitably leads to disaster." He questions that perception.

"Every country in Europe, except Turkey, has fertility rates below the replacement level," he writes. Another *Globe and Mail* article says that the birth rate in Italy and Spain is dropping so fast that over the next few decades their population may decline by as

See IMMIGRATION p.2...



Emigrants leaving the Netherlands.

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News

The secular state and a desecularized society

Sue Careless

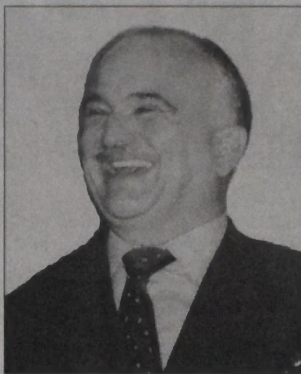
MONTREAL, Quebec — Richard John Neuhaus, author of *The Naked Public Square: Religion and Democracy in America* gave one of the most persuasive lectures.

"The extraordinary thing happening on planet Earth today is the de-secularization of world history. Until recently, sociologists were puzzled by what they called 'American exceptionalism.' The United States is the most modern nation in the world, yet it is also strongly religious. It violates the rule that modernity — and modernity's political expression in liberal democracy — goes hand in hand

with secularization.

"Some of those same sociologists have now decided that the rule was wrong. Peter Berger of Boston University now speaks of the 'exceptionalism' of Western Europe, for Western Europe (and North American intellectuals who take their cues from Europe) sticks out as the secular exception in a world that is becoming ever more religious.

"Since Sept. 11, we are newly aware of the more than one billion Muslims in the world who, sometimes with suicidal zeal, reject what they view as the secularism of the West. The same phenomenon is



SUE CARELESS

HRH Prince Al Hassan bin Talal

evident in India with newly politicized forms of Hinduism. But the most overlooked part of this global picture is the explosion of Christianity, especially in Latin America, Africa and Asia.... Christianity has 2.5 billion adherents mainly in the southern hemisphere. Suddenly Western Europe looks like an island of secularism in a sea of global religion.

"The great question is whether modernity and liberal democracy can be secured in ways compatible with vibrant religious faith. Can Islam produce a comparable religious argument to Pope John Paul II's 1991 encyclical *Centesimus*

Annus / A Hundred Years in support of modernity and democracy? We do not know. We must hope and pray that it can. But this we do know: If it is true that liberal democracy is inseparable from secularism, liberal democracy has a very dim future in a world of resurgent religion."

Secular as temporary

Douglas Farrow, associate professor of Christian Thought at McGill and co-chair of the conference, questioned the concept of "liberal neutrality," that the state serves as a kind of referee. See CHRISTIAN page 3...

Canada's immigration policy criticized

... continued from page 1

much as one-third. "Canada already gets immigration at a per capita rate twice that of any other country. To the Europeans, we must appear unhinged."

Stoffman sees "a glaring flaw in the argument that prosperity depends on population growth."

"Immigration of 600,000 a year would be unmanageable and, from a national security standpoint, intolerable," argues Stoffman. "To almost every Canadian, it would be unacceptable." Canada's current immigration limit is about 250,000 a year. "Too much immigration will make Canada's biggest cities more crowded, more polluted and more expensive — not because there is anything wrong with immigrants but because that's the nature of very big cities."

On the argument that immigrants are needed to help support the pensions of Canada's aging Baby Boomers as they prepare to retire, Stoffman says immigrants don't tend to lower Canada's average age, and that Ottawa has been increasing funding to the Canada Pension Plan. He also contends that Canada's productivity will increase as technology improves, which will help pay for retirement benefits.

"Immigration pushes down wages," Stoffman argues. He believes large-scale immigration will add thousands of low-skilled workers to the labor market. He also makes the broad claim that "many people who live in Toronto have no skills and cannot speak English."

Knocking down straw men

After reading Stoffman's story, Harry Kits, of CPJ, observes, "It feels to me that he's creating straw men and knocks them down with reasonable arguments. That was



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Harry Kits

my overall response." While Stoffman addresses economic concerns, he ignores "the compassionate side" — such as "opening our borders to those fleeing war. To make so much of the economic [side] is not fair."

Stoffman's argument against population growth is "almost a tempest in a teapot," asserts Kits. "Even if it's true that a stable or not growing much [population] is a good thing, it's not an issue.... The big question is, 'Do we want a multicultural society?'" Stoffman does not seem to recognize the values of diversity in society.

"Unfettered growth is probably a bad thing, but it depends how it's handled," says Kits. "Growth isn't bad if you handle it appropriately." For cities where immigrants settle, planning is important.

Addressing Stoffman's argument about unskilled immigrants, Kits says, "My concern is whether he's doing his analysis backwards." Canada should consider "if people are coming to the country, how do we make sure their skills are exercised? Our policies don't allow skilled people to take their place" in appropriate jobs. For instance, doctors sometimes

immigrate here and are met with strict regulations imposed by that profession in Canada. But still, says Kits, "People from many countries have come with nothing but their skills and have gone on to become incredible contributors to Canada."

Kits also observes that Canada's immigration policy favors immigrants with much money and marketable skills.

Kits believes Stoffman's argument about immigrants needed to support Canada's pensions is another "straw man. I don't think many people argue that."

Generally, Kits objects to Stoffman's approach: "He doesn't start with a values position."

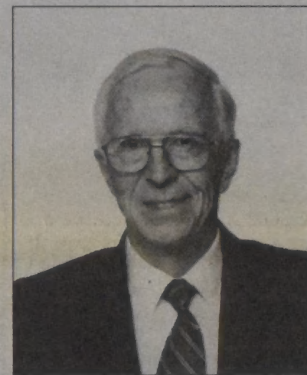
A drag on the system

But Martin Collacott, a senior fellow of the Fraser Institute, based in B.C., says Stoffman's writing is "much along the lines of my research." Recently, the institute published a paper by Collacott called *Canada's Immigration Policy: the Need for Major Reform*, which focuses especially on the economic benefits of immigration, and which offers recommendations for changes.

Collacott agrees with Stoffman's population growth argument; if large population brings prosperity to a country, he says, then India would be prosperous.

An increase in immigration would also increase some potential social problems. The costs probably outweigh the gains," says Collacott. He thinks that Canada's current levels of immigration are already quite high.

Regarding Family Class immigrants — members of an immigrant's family which he or she sponsors — Collacott says "no one would oppose" sponsoring spouses



COURTESY MARTIN COLLOCOTT

Martin Collacott

and children into Canada. But when extended family members are sponsored, they are "a drag on the system — a major drag on the performance of immigrants in general," he asserts. Extended family members are "not that helpful in Canada."

Collacott believes Canada's immigration policy gives first priority to Family Class immigrants so that the party in power will get more votes. "There's been pressure to expand Family Class" for political reasons, he contends. In his recent paper, he wrote: "the priority given to Family Class immigration is in conflict with the best interests of the country. Canadians should be concerned not only because of the economic and social costs of such programs, but also because of the impact they have on creating social tensions and a less cohesive society."

Collacott agrees with Stoffman's argument about immigrants not helping out Canada's pension system.

On the questions of immigrants' skills, Collacott acknowledges that "the percentage of those with

degrees has increased." But the question remains of whether well-educated and skilled immigrants can find useful jobs. He gives an example: "In the year 2000, we admitted 15,000 engineers." The same year, 10,000 engineers graduated from Canadian universities. The surplus of engineers has driven down their wages in Canada, so recently many Canadian engineers have gone to the U.S. to get jobs.

Unskilled immigrants stay

Collacott observes that skilled immigrants to Canada who are unable to find suitable work here tend to return to their home countries. But "the ones who stay are unskilled stay because they get more welfare benefits here" than they would in their home countries. The market used to be better for unskilled labor in Canada, but times have changed, argues Collacott. "Prior to World War 2, most jobs in Canada were unskilled. Now very few of the jobs are unskilled."

Collacott argues, "At present, we are doing no favor to many immigrants by allowing them to come here if their economic prospects are seriously limited. Sheer numbers and their concentration in relatively few areas could, moreover, lead to a reduction in the level of acceptance by Canadians.... It is important, therefore, that instead of concentrating on larger numbers, we look at the quality of the newcomers, and ways of ensuring that those who do come have a reasonable opportunity to be successful in their new land."

(See related story on page 3)

Christian religion carved out a safe space for the secular

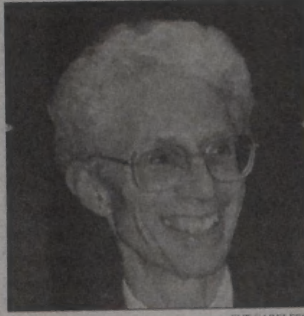
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regulating the competition among numerous religious groups and between the religious and the non-religious.

"It was the Christian religion that carved out a safe space for the secular. The very concept of the secular state is a Christian one. The state is secular because it is strictly provisional, owing to the fact that it belongs to an age (*saeculum*) that is passing away, an age that will be — and in some sense already has been — superseded by the kingdom of God. The secular state is a liberal state but it is neither opposed to religion nor does it fancy itself the referee of religion. It is liberal because it knows that it is temporary, not because it imagines itself to be neutral."

An ideal secular state

American political theorist, William Galston, defined an ideal secular state as "four no's and two yes's": 1. A secular state should not be a theocracy. 2. There should be no establishment of a particular religion or ensemble of religions. 3. There should be no religious test for citizenship or public office. 4. There should be no officially endorsed or administered prayer or religious practise. (Voluntary prayer would be acceptable in schools but not state-enforced school prayer.)

For the positive Galston argued that there should be equal treatment for all faiths with neither preferred nor invidious treatment. Secondly, a secular state should have an expansive notion of ac-



William Galston

commodation. Religious and non-religious discourse should both be welcome.

Galston said democracy legitimates itself when it observes its limits and invalidates itself when it overrides them. Galston illustrated with an example of a mythical king who was persuaded to convert to Judaism. He then ruled that all the citizens of his kingdom should also convert. Such coercion would be an obvious abuse of monarchical power. But then Galston, a Jew himself, asked, what if a democratic government passed the same decision? Even if the vote were a clear two-thirds majority that all inhabitants of the country should convert to Judaism, it would still be an abuse of democracy. "Even a liberal democracy can abuse its power while following perfectly democratic procedures."

The political sphere should not be a sovereign sphere of "civic totalitarianism." Religious associations should enjoy considerable authority to determine their own affairs.

For instance, they may enforce certain gender roles in their priesthood or rabbinate. Religious groups have the right to exclude as well as to include. "Yet the core evils of the human condition the state must rightly restrict. A government needs to protect the exit rights of members of voluntary associations. Voluntary associations cannot be a prison."

Galston also spoke of "institutional pluralism" and "associational diversity," drawing on the thinking of the Dutch Calvinists' "sphere sovereignty" or what in Roman Catholic social thought is referred to today as "subsidiarity." The government should not unduly intrude into the affairs of the other spheres (such as commerce and

family) but would adjudicate disputes that arose between the spheres where they overlapped.

Deep moral regret

Philosopher Charles Taylor, Professor Emeritus at McGill, held that with really deep dilemmas there may not be a unique solution, only a partial solution and with it a sense of "deep moral regret." "Some solutions will be totally unacceptable. You aim to arrive at a partial solution you can live with."

It's crucial that the different parties articulate what's really important to them and that all parties listen. "We're not listening to each other, to the plurality of voices and viewpoints. We must avoid monological thinking and delegitimizing

the other voices by not listening. During the Meech Lake Accord, the rest of Canada could not hear what Quebec was talking about.

"When we translate religious convictions into secular terms we lose something. Religious people have made an effort to understand the nonreligious. Now secular people have to make more of an effort to understand religious people who speak a language that transcends."

Taylor argued that not all questions should be dealt with in the judicial process. "If we sat down informally to talk it out, we would more likely come up with many creative solutions instead of a single, cast-iron one. Bring both the majority and the minorities into a conversation that respects them."

The next Christendom



Principalities & Powers

David T. Koyzis

Every so often a book is published that quickly becomes a "must-read" and engenders a discussion that goes on for some time afterwards. Such is Philip Jenkins' *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (Oxford, 2002). Jenkins, a professor at Penn State University, argues that the future of the Christian faith lies to the "south," particularly in Africa and Asia, where it is spreading quickly and dramatically, dwarfing the old Christendoms of Europe and North America.

Many of us have had the experience of attending a worship service in a congregation of one of the old line denominations and finding that we are among the youngest people there. Pews are largely empty, with only a handful of elderly and late-middle-aged parishioners present. This is particularly true in western Europe and Great Britain, but it is no less true here in Canada and the United States, at least in some quarters.

Expanding with startling swiftness

On the other hand, a visit to one of the sub-Saharan African countries indicates that Christianity is not only alive and well but is expanding with startling swiftness. Moreover, contrary to the opinion of retired Bishop John Shelby Spong of the Episcopal Church, who argues that Christianity must increasingly adopt the assumptions of late modernity if it hopes to survive, those churches growing fastest are those resolutely anchored in orthodoxy and a robust supernaturalism. By virtually any criterion, Jenkins notes, the most successful movement of any sort during the twentieth century was Pentecostalism, which is playing a major role in the growth of the global church.

Even the Anglican communion, so mired in controversy in North America over residential schools and revisionist bishops, is dominated by scores of millions of evangelical Anglicans in Africa and Asia, whose formidable impact was felt at the decennial Lambeth conference four years ago. Some day, after the Church of England is finally disestablished, a bishop from Uganda or Kenya could conceivably become Archbishop of Canterbury, much as a Pole became Pope nearly a quarter century ago.

Yet the phenomenal growth of Christianity in the two-thirds world does not automatically translate into a thoughtful and vigorous cultural and political witness, as pointed out by Paul Freston, a sociologist at the Methodist University in São Paulo, Brazil. Many African leaders are professed evangelical Christians who were educated in mission schools. Among those professing Christian faith have been Tanzania's late president Julius Nyerere, Kenya's Daniel Arap Moi, and Zambia's Kenneth Kaunda and Frederick Chiluba. Guatemala has had two evangelical presidents, including the notorious General Efraín Ríos Montt in the 1980s.

Unfortunately an evangelical president does not necessarily make for just rule, constitutional government or an end to corruption. Sadder yet, the fact that Rwanda is a largely Christian country did not prevent the inter-ethnic warfare and outright genocide that began there in 1994 and quickly spread to the surrounding countries.

Freston concludes that we need to be wary of all claimed vanguards, whether marxist or evangelical. He believes that the immaturity of the Christian cultural witness in the two-thirds world is due to the absence of a "protestant ethic," which sees Christ as the transformer of culture and his creation as the arena of this transformative activity.

Rather than placing political power at the service of ecclesiastical expansion, as occurs so frequently among Christians in the two-thirds world, there is great need for reflection on the political task of the Christian community, particularly on the meaning and implications of just governance. Only in this way will church growth become serviceable to the kingdom of God rather than to the mere perpetuation of the institutional church.



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Immigrants account for growth in Canada's largest cities

If it were not for foreign immigrants, reported the *National Post*, Toronto would have had a net loss of population in 2001, according to a StatsCan report. Of the 199,036 people who moved to the city last year, two-thirds or 115,900 were immigrants. The additional 21 per cent arrived from elsewhere in Ontario, while 14 per cent came from other provinces.

Without immigrants, more people would be leaving Canada's three largest cities — Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal — than arriving, Statistics Canada reported.

Overall, Canada's total population is nearly static, growing only one per cent between July, 2001, and July, 2002, reaching 31,414,000 people.

Immigrants are likely to stay in Toronto after arriving, said Jeffrey Reitz, a professor at University of Toronto's Centre for Ethnic and Immigration Studies. "One of the reasons immigrants come to Toronto is for jobs," said Dr. Reitz.

"But they also come because the ethnic communities are very well established. That is a reason why they are more likely to stay in Toronto than native-born Canadians.

According to Dr. Reitz, Quebec is the only net loser of immigrants, meaning more international immigrants move away from Quebec than choose to settle there.

Editorial

A vision of history; a call to conversion

Harry der Nederlanden

One of the questions that popped up time and again during the conference on the legacy of H. Evan Runner held at Redeemer was: How do we today infect our students with the vision and sense of mission that Runner passed on to so many of his students? Behind it was the question: Why can't we get young adults excited about this vision of Christian scholarship and Christian communal action the way we were back then?

How we see history has a huge impact on our attitude toward our role in society and our 'feel' for what we can contribute, our 'sense' of what is possible. The Western belief in progress through reason and education had the benefit of lending a tremendous sense of possibility and hope to people. We in the West are losing or have lost that belief in the power of science and education to make life better for everyone. That disillusion, amounting to a loss of confidence, has communicated itself to the Christian community as well, and not just to our youth. We, too, are no longer as brash, as idealistic and as gung-ho as we were in the fiery '70s.

Seeing the damage caused to the environment and the subservience of reason to the interests of the powerful robs many today of a sense of direction and motivation. It is difficult to work with commitment and enthusiasm when you suspect that what you're doing is destroying the world, harming the future for the next generation and making life worse for people in other countries.

Conditions, in this respect, were much more favorable for those who came to Canada in the '50s and '60s. They came with a tremendous sense of vitality and hope, at least in part because those old beliefs in progress were still intact.

A vision of history rich with potential

The teachings of Dr. Runner reinforced the sense of empowerment of his students and gave it focus and direction: he gave them a vision of history rife with things to do and rich with potential. Purpose, pattern and periodicity characterized history as related by Runner (and probably by most mainstream thinkers of recent times).

These three P's, however, would be challenged by a great many thinkers nowadays, especially by those who call themselves post-modern. Yet, if you read the post-moderns closely, they all divide history into periods too, even if only into two: 'before me' and 'after me.' 'Before me' deluded people thought that truth was somehow captured and embodied in the lives of people to be read there by all with eyes to see (trained eyes, of course). 'After me' everyone will see (assuming they have been disillusioned by me) that these supposed patterns have been stamped there by those arrogant and powerful enough to make themselves the center of history.

Sometimes this post-modern skepticism translates into the belief that the past is infinitely plastic; it is like putty, having no shape except what we impress on it. But that would be the height of self-centeredness – precisely what the post-modernists most want to avoid, namely, setting up ourselves as the center of history. There is much, much more going on in history, they'll remind us, than we can begin to grasp with our feeble, schematic patterns, so much so that we delude ourselves when we think we have discerned the pattern.

A healthy reminder

That's a healthy reminder, it seems to me. As soon as we have told the story of how the past produced such civilized creatures as us (thereby writing ourselves into the role of hero on whom the progress of the plot depends) some neglected part of history (like the environment – what we thought was nothing more than the mute setting of our drama) sneaks up behind us and kicks us off center stage into the cheap seats.

The question I ask myself is: Did Runner's vision of history and our place in it give us such a sense of mission and empowerment precisely because it put us centre stage?

One part of the legacy of Evan Runner – of a Kuyperian worldview in general – is that it gives us a historical vision, a world story with purpose, pattern and periodicity. Those who caught that vision, were empowered: they had a role to play, an office, on the world stage. Human beings need that to be motivated. Their actions need to have meaning, a meaning not just related to eternity but also to what's actually going on in the streets, in the stores, in the office buildings and in the house of parliament. Besides purpose, pattern and periodicity, Runner added another P – let's call it power or propulsion. He used the word "motive," which he linked with movement and motor, that which drives us on through time to give to time the shape of liberation, revelation, restoration to the glorification of its Maker.

All those who sat at the feet of Runner (sometimes quite literally, as he climbed up on a desk) learned of the power Greek thought continues to have on our thinking.

"Sema - soma!" (prison - body) he would shout. Under the influence of Greek thought, he explained, Christians have for ages been tempted to think of bodily life as an obstacle to the life of the spirit. When he came to the Middle Ages, the nature - grace dualism dividing life into that which needs redemption by God's grace and that which can make it on its own power (like human reason) came up for critique. As he moved on to Renaissance humanism, the Reformation, the Enlightenment and so on, each period was described in terms of its own source of motivation and driving ideals, but above all, in terms of its own way of perverting and stifling our response to God's call. Except for the Reformation – our own tradition. Any adulterations to the biblical vision were usually attributed to influences other than the Reformation. They did not belong to its essential spirit.

In many ways, these almost personified periods served a lot like heresies served in the thought of Roman Catholic thinkers like G.K. Chesterton – erring patterns to look out for in our thinking. A historian like Eric Voegelin detects the heresy of gnosticism everywhere in modernity. Leo Strauss's students (like Alan Bloom) are armed with similar critical machinery. Others uncover the sin of utopianism here, there and all around the square.

Painting history as a spiritual landscape:

Our most influential teachers paint history as a spiritual landscape: they map it out as contested terrain and identify potential enemies.

Post-modernism also uncovers certain mortal sins in the history of humanity; and those of us who see history in terms of purpose and the other P's are among the sinners. It's a telling criticism, and it applies not just to the Genesis mandate of subduing the earth, but to how we Kuyperians and all neo-Calvinists see ourselves – namely, as vice- or co-regents over creation with God.

Does this mean that the Kuyperian worldview has a fatal flaw?

I won't deny that it may be so abused and often is. But Runner did not present his view of history as a map that keeps on the right track; he taught it as something in the light of which we might examine our personal and communal lives to see whether they are, as we claim, fully and totally subjected to the power of the Word and the Spirit. His teaching was always more than a critique of Greek thought or of the Enlightenment; it was a call to conversion – conversion of our minds and of the totality of our lives, including our corporate lives to the renewing rule of the Kingdom of God.

Some have, perhaps rightly, accused Kuyperians of erecting an immaculate history in which they emerge, purified of all taints of dualism and synthesis, as the heroic vanguard of a new age. But the sword of critique, as Runner wielded it, cut two ways – at oneself and one's own tradition as well as at the forces of unbelief and compromise.

It is perhaps here, where critique becomes a call to conversion, where reason and scholarship are challenged to open themselves up to the need for repentance and forgiveness, that we can again begin to kindle new enthusiasm for a chastened but visionary sense of cultural mission in the next generation. It's not just a dream; it's already happening in evangelical circles south of the border.

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Letter/News

Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness

Re: *Who's afraid of George Bush? Of Saddam Hussein?* (Oct. 7):

Much can be said in response to this editorial, for you have raised more questions than you've answered. Also, you've made important assertions without providing the framework needed so that the readers can give the critical issues you raise the careful thought they deserve. After all, we are dealing with the real possibility of an international war on Iraq!

I'll just touch on a couple of comments you made.

FIRST, in connection with the Canadian Council of Churches' Open Letter to Prime Minister Jean Chrétien entitled, "NO to War with Iraq" (Sept. 23). It would have been very helpful if, in addition to the Council's press release, you would have published the following excerpts from our Church Leaders' urgent message to the Prime Minister.

Crushing international sanctions

"Another Gulf War now would be wrong, first of all because of the suffering such a war would inflict on the population of Iraq-people who have already suffered so bitterly. Our Christian colleagues in that region have urged us to educate our own societies about how crushing the international sanctions have been for the health, education, livelihoods and hope of most Iraqi men, women and (especially) children. Recently, those same colleagues have been pleading with us to speak and act against the threat of another war.

"When one part of the body suffers, all suffer with it." That maxim is biblical language, but on another level it is simple human experience. We in the West will be judged, by future generations and by the Creator of all, for the damage we have been willing to inflict in the name of security. The past eleven years of sanctions is a case in point. Those sanctions did not in fact weaken the oppressive grip of the Saddam Hussein regime. In their impact on civilian life, they hurt the wrong people-ordinary and innocent Iraqis. The international community has already delayed far too long in acting against the harm being done in its name.

"Yes, the suffering of Iraqis lies also at the feet of President Saddam Hussein and his government. That regime's bellicose and ruthless policies began draining the life-blood of Iraqis long before international sanctions were in place. There is no doubt that many residents of Iraq long and pray for a 'regime change'. All the more striking, then, is the strength with which voices from that country and region urge us not to bring about a new regime by means of a violent invasion from outside.

"We urge the Government of Canada not to lose confidence that a peace-building approach to the problem of Iraq, consistent with international law and taking the common good of Iraq's people as its starting point, can be developed, can be fruitful, and can prevail over war-fatalism in international negotiations.

"Such an approach should press all countries for compliance with international

law and United Nations Security Council resolutions. Iraq is not the only country that stands in violation of them. Also, it should aim at ridding the whole region, ultimately, of weapons of mass destruction. It should provide for control of conventional armaments as well, stanching the flood of arms to neighboring countries. A new approach should also reconsider the compensation obligations imposed on Iraq after the Gulf War, and take into account Iraq's debt load. There must be economic hope for Iraqi society, for without it Iraqis will not recover the energy they will need to rebuild their country — nor to change their government. The world should not repeat the errors of the settlement imposed on Germany after World War I.

"It is more than evident that peace in Iraq and in the Middle East region is a spectacularly difficult goal to reach. Many are tempted to give in to despair; but many, too, are those who persist as peacemakers. It is the peacemakers especially who are called children of God. The world was created for peace, not for war. That is an affirmation of faith. To live by it — to act politically on the truth of it — is fruitful beyond all calculation.

"The Psalm (72) from which Canada took its national motto (*A mari usque ad mare*) recognizes the reality of struggle and conflict in a world where 'the weak and the needy' must be delivered 'from oppression and violence'. The psalm calls for a leader who brings peace. In his days justice shall flourish, and peace, till the moon fails...

"May you and your colleagues, Mr. Chrétien, bear fruit in the noble work of peace building, and taste the blessings that are reserved for peacemakers."

SECOND, I, together with many other believers, have much more than what you call "scant hope for the course advanced by the Canadian Council of Churches' diplomacy and negotiation." We actually have deep hope! Why? Precisely because a public witness and appropriate political actions undertaken in faith-filled hope by citizens and politicians who 'persist as peacemakers' are not in vain.

As the Church Leaders rightly remind the Prime Minister and us: "It is the peacemakers especially who are called children of God." They are so right: "The world was created for peace, not for war. To live by it? to act politically on the truth of it? is fruitful beyond all calculation."

I'm deeply thankful that the Council of Churches has the biblical courage of faith-conviction to express publicly: "May you and your colleagues, Mr. Chrétien, bear fruit in the noble work of peace building, and taste the blessings that are reserved for peacemakers."

Wouldn't it be a powerful testimony if all Canadian congregations and denominations fervently prayed that all the world's peacemakers purposely persist in their urgent efforts to prevent war and to promote enduring freedom, real peace and basic justice for all God's creatures?

Indeed, as you observed in your concluding paragraph: "Ultimately, George (Bush), the War on Terrorism must become a war for

the hearts and minds of people. When they see a U.S. plane overhead (or any other country's plane), their hearts must be filled not with terror but with hope."

On Oct. 7, in a prime-time televised speech, President Bush summarized various White House arguments for military action against Iraq and declared: "We refuse to live in fear."

The apostle Paul wrote to the beleaguered believers in Rome: "And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God...And hope does not disappoint us." (Romans 5:1-5)

And the apostle James reminds us: "Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness." (James 3:8)

Gerald Vandezande
Scarborough, Ont.

Reply:

We apologize for not publishing the Kairos letter in full in our last issue; however, we received it shortly after the news announcement quoting very briefly from the letter — too late to include it.

Although I agree with Gerald's and Kairos' conclusions, I do want to cling to the belief that sometimes generals and their armies also deserve to be called peacemakers. Otherwise, a Christian could not be a soldier. Charles Colson and others have argued cogently from a Christian viewpoint that this is one of those instances. I'm not convinced by their arguments, but I am sure that they, too, see themselves as peacemakers, not warmongers.

Harry der Nederlanden, Editor

Reformed Ecumenical Council joins Reformed-Pentecostal dialogue

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (REC) — Experience and Worship was the theme for the opening meeting of the second round of talks between representatives of the Reformed and Pentecostal traditions in May. In the first round of six meetings, The World Alliance of Reformed Churches represented the Reformed tradition, but in the second round the Reformed Ecumenical Council has also named a delegate. Noliher Moyo of the Reformed Church of Zambia attended as a representative of the REC.

In the opening round, participants already identified some common elements. Each tradition kept the Word of God central in worship. Each related worship with Christian life and witness. However, the issue of the discernment of God's presence in, for example, ecstatic utterances will need more discussion.

Moyo recommended after the first meeting that REC member churches try to increase their contacts with Pentecostal churches, and that the REC invite observers from the Pentecostal churches to some of their broader gatherings.

The World Alliance has a series of bilateral dialogues. As a result of WARC-REC discussions in the last two years, the REC joined this team as a participant, thus broadening the representation of the Reformed side of the dialogue.

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Education

Mark Noll asks, 'What is evangelicalism?'

Natasha Vanderberg

TORONTO — Asking why and how evangelicalism emerged, thinks Mark A. Noll, is an important part of understanding evangelicalism today. In a lecture given at Tyndale College and Seminary in Toronto, Ontario on October 16, Noll attempted to come as close as possible to an answer to these questions.

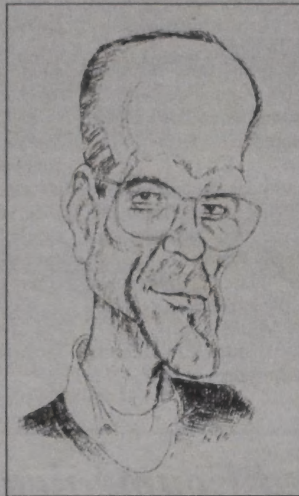
Author of many scholarly and popular books, including *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* and *Turning Points: Decisive Moments in the History of Christianity*, Noll is the McManis Professor of Christian Thought at Wheaton College. In his scholarly work, Noll concentrates on the history of Christianity in general, and the emergence of evangelicalism in the 18th century in particular.

The question of how and why evangelicalism emerged is difficult, almost impossible, to answer, said Noll in his lecture. The more factors we take into account, he said, the closer we come to an accurate answer. As such, his lecture included many factors that lead to the emergence of an evangelical movement.

Not self-aware till 18th century

Before launching into the factors, Noll noted that what we look back and name "evangelicalism" was not a self-aware movement until the mid 18th century. Before this time, while evangelical elements such as an emphasis on personal conversion and the scriptures existed, the people involved in the movements would not have identified themselves as evangelical.

So what allowed evangelicalism to become a recognizable movement? Noll offered four factors that contributed to the rise of evangelicalism. First, Noll asserted that evangelicalism could not have come into existence without the movement of the Holy Spirit. He spoke of a "remarkable outpouring of the Spirit," not unlike the outpouring that other communities, places and times experienced as well.



HARRY DER NEDERLANDEN ILLUSTRATION

Mark A. Noll

While the Holy Spirit was indeed involved, said Noll, this involvement is not sufficient to explain the emergence of a movement. In addition to the work of the Holy Spirit, specific historical factors contributed to the emergence. Noll asserted that both spiritual and concrete historical factors must be taken into account when looking at the history of a faith community.

A challenge to Catholicism

Personal agency was the first historical factor cited by Noll. A number of "unusual people" had "unusual effects" in the 18th century, said Noll. Among these people were preachers (George Whitfield), organizers (John Wesley), hymnists (Charles Wesley) and theologians (Jonathan Edwards), to name a few. These unusual people, claimed Noll, had the unusual ability to move, inspire and organize groups of people. From George Whitfield, whose passionate public speaking was admired by students of drama, to Jonathan Edwards, since whom there has "never been an evangelical who has been a better philosopher," these people generated excitement and became "effective operators."

The historical context into

The marks of maturity

There are grisly days when some student who comes by my office to talk leaves me with a deep fear for the future of the church. Their words betray a gross immaturity. They are rigid, self-inflated, and completely unaware of their deepest needs. The End must be near, I mutter to myself. Ecclesiastes, a book that otherwise seems jaded, speaks to me profoundly.

Yet there are some days when the sun rises high above the Niagara escarpment, and an undergraduate peeks into my office to talk, and I have the opposite experience. They recount to me a story of their changed life, and changed paradigms. "I was over there," they recount, referring to a mindset they used to occupy, "and now I'm over here." A new day: new initiatives and disciplines in their life, and now they play with hints of a distinctive calling from God. "It sounds to me like you are stumbling towards maturity," I relay to the student with a smile. My hope is restored for the future of the church — and the world.

What are the marks of maturity? To begin with, maturity involves self-knowledge. A wise place to begin your learning as a student is to look and listen to your own experience. Mature students know their limits, and have a good feeling for their weaknesses and lingering pains. But to "know your misery" is only the start. Maturity lies across a much more dangerous road.

Lawyers show the way to maturity

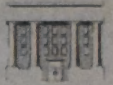
Legal language is full of euphemisms, and here is a classic line from your standard will: "When the will matures. . ." We know that what the lawyers mean can be more directly translated to "When the person dies. . ." In the case of wills, to become "mature" is to die, and the reality is the same for those who follow Jesus of Nazareth, the one who walked voluntarily to a bloody cross. Maturity lies beyond death.

It could be said that as we grow up from the self-centered universe of a child we slowly realize who we are, and what our strengths and limits might be. Then, having attained this stage of empowerment, we are next asked to die. Not to forsake all our gifts, but to nurture them for service to others rather than ourselves. Maturity, when it blooms most fully, manifests itself as unselfishness, as a deep compassion for other creatures and the creation, without the expectation of profits or glory.

which these movers and organizers marched was another contributing factor to the emergence of evangelicalism. After the 1730s and 1740s the fear of the power of the Holy Spirit to change an individual faded, with the lessening effect of the Puritan revolution. With this fading, the door was opened to an increasingly evangelical message, with its emphasis on the work of the Holy Spirit. In addition, the message of the preachers played into a certain anti-Catholicism, which went hand in hand with anti-France sentiments in England. The enthusiasm of the evangelicals

Campus Culture

Peter Schuurman



Nobody knows this more than someone who takes the role of a parent towards a helpless child. What courage it takes to forget one's own needs and sacrifice them for the sake of someone else — without demanding an equal return! What courage is required to wrestle and tame the anger that wells up inside us, the anger that insists on our rights rather than faithfulness to our new role. What courage it takes let go of everything, especially our fears....

Goofy maturity

Knowledge of self and the courage to die to that self are not the full picture, though. There is one more aspect that brings maturity to full color, and that is joy. Maturity does not shine when we merely do what we ought to do. It shines when we enjoy doing what we ought to be doing. When the habits of our heart have been shaped and flow naturally in the way that the Spirit of God loves. This is the place of our greatest freedom, and deepest mirth.

The Christian life is, at its heart, not about denial and death, although these may be the road. Christian life is resurrected life, and it casts off the shroud of dreariness. Ronald Rolheiser said: "Spiritual maturity lies in the simple capacity to admire — to admire beauty, admire talent and admire youth, without trying to possess them." Full Christian maturity returns us to the riches that may have enslaved us before we gave ourselves away to God's higher purposes. It returns us to child-like glee at the gifts life brings. We do not shun, but rather celebrate the best things in life, and we share them freely with all.

Maturity is surely a good goal for every student of God. But it is not something that one can set as a resolution for the new year. It is not an achievement, but rather something that happens to you by the grace of God — if you allow his Spirit to break, shape, and prod you down that dangerous road. That, at least, seems to be the story for those inspiring young people that grace my small office.



Peter Schuurman is the Christian Reformed campus chaplain at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ont.

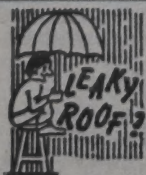
text, the importance of personal experience in testing the validity of a belief increased and the role of tradition decreased.

These factors, says Noll, allowed for the space for evangelicalism to emerge, and this emergence is one that we must remember when attempting to understand the modern evangelical movement, especially if we find ourselves a part of it. Knowing where we came from, thinks Noll, is important in understanding where we are now.

seemed the strongest alternative and challenge to the Catholic Church.

Individual innovation

The final factor noted by Noll was the rapid changes of the 18th century, from massive population growth and the industrial revolution to the creation of a middle class and parliamentary freedom. Within these changes, thinks Noll, space was created for individual innovation. With this space for the individual, the importance of the individual increased, including in the realm of religion. In this con-



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Arts/Media

A hilarious character movie with a large, dynamic cast

My Big Fat Greek Wedding

Starring: Nia Vardalos, Gia Carides, John Corbett, Joey Fatone, Ian Gomez. **Directed by:** Joel Zwick. **Produced by:** Tom Hanks, Gary Goetzman, Rita Wilson. **Written by:** Nia Vardalos. **Distributor:** IFC Films. **Reviewed by** Ron VandenBurg

Here's a little independent film, made in Canada, starring Canadian talent like Nia Vardalos, Andrea Martin, Fiona Reid and Bruce Grey. It is released during the summer blockbuster time and up against the monster Hollywood favorites like *Spiderman* and *Star Wars* and whatever else blew up this summer. It quietly made people notice it, and word of mouth has made it the best grossing independent film in history. Last weekend was its 25th week in the theatres, and it has grossed \$147,900,000. What has made it so successful?

Its origin comes from Vardalos herself. Vardalos, of Toronto's Second City fame, wrote and performed a one-woman show based on her experiences as a child of Greek immigrants. In Los Angeles, Rita Wilson (who is also of Greek descent) and Tom Hanks enjoyed the show, and after reading Vardalos's screenplay, decided to produce it as a movie.

I credit the film's appeal to the girl-meets-boy romantic happy-ending genre. Also, this is a hilarious character movie with a large, dynamic cast of great actors showing us the character flaws and blessings of a wonderful loving family. The main reason that this romantic comedy has such great

mass appeal may be its relation to the immigrant experience, more precisely, the experience of children of immigrants.

Hitting a chord

Vardalos has hit a chord with my own personal experience as the child of immigrants, and whether one is of Greek, Dutch, Chinese or Italian descent, this film replays most of our life choices and crossroads.

In this story, almost everyone and everything is Greek. The main character Toula (played by screenwriter Vardalos) lives at home and works at the family restaurant "Dancing Zorba". At work and at home, she is surrounded by Greek flags and statues. Her father can trace every word back to its Greek origins (some of which he makes up along the way).

In my case, everyone had a Dutch heritage. As a youngster, I thought that as a person got older they acquired a Dutch accent, because every older person spoke that way. Friends would proclaim, "You're not much if you're not Dutch."

Vardalos narrates that when she entered Greek school, she resisted when her mother told her she had to learn Greek. How else would she



EQUINOX FILMS

Greek Wedding stars Nia Vardalos (left) and John Corbett.

be able to talk to her future mother-in-law? At Greek school, she sat in a room translating, "If Nick has one goat and Maria has nine, how soon will they marry?"

My own memories of Dutch school was spending one summer learning a handful of words and doing a play about two guys arguing about strawberries. What was that Dutch word for strawberries?

Toula breaks out of her predetermined future (finding a Greek man and having Greek babies) by going to a community college to take computer courses. In the process, she gets contacts, new clothes and a new attitude. She begins a job at her aunt's travel agency, where she meets a stranger named Ian Miller (John Corbett), a high school teacher who is tall, handsome and definitely not Greek.

I personally always thought it

strange when my friends of Dutch heritage would talk about dating a Canadian. Did they therefore think of themselves differently?

Choosing between her family and her love

Soon she has to choose between her family and her love. At first she tries to hide him from them. When the couple is discovered, Toula's family sees Ian as a Xeno, a foreigner. Here we watch as the couple goes through the difficult acceptance stage with the family. We see Ian go through awkward family moments. When they discover that he is a vegetarian, the aunt's solution is to roast a lamb. Brothers and cousins teach Ian all the wrong words to say in public, while aunts and uncles are relieved that 30-year old Toula has finally found somebody.

Unfortunately, we also see the couple taking a light-hearted approach to the family's faith and church life. In a Greek Orthodox Church, we see Ian being baptized in a kiddie pool, because the church never does adult baptism. The family accepts him for doing this, but he and his future spouse know that this is a just a step that will give them a family blessing. What we don't see is Ian learning about the faith and thereby making a commitment to God. For Toula, faith is a part of Greekness to be rejected or at least molded to her purposes.

Sadly, Christian families too can point to family members who bring their future spouses to church, only to later fade away from any connection to the church.

In the end, this movie is about family and identity. Ian's family has no connections at all. "I only have two cousins," he says. "They live in Wisconsin." His rich parents are more concerned with what their fellow club members think than any connection to family. In sharp contrast, Toula's parents, siblings, uncles, aunts and cousins are interwoven in her life, and the more she tries to escape them, the more she discovers that they make up who she is. As the child of an immigrant, she wants to be part of both cultures and in the end is able to do so.

For me, the choices were different. The issues were not cultural. They were faith-based. In the end, it was not a question of what I wanted, but where God was leading. And that made all the difference.

Laughing places

Sonya VanderVeen Feddema

At times I pray, "Lord, send me someone I can laugh with." An odd prayer? Maybe so. But when I've had enough of this world's grief, I ache to have a belly laugh. A tears-in-my-eyes laugh. A taste-of-heaven laugh.

A taste of heaven

Laughter does give us a taste of heaven and puts us in touch with God's goodness. Tildy, a young girl in Karen Cushman's medieval tale, *Matilda Bone*, understands that truth. She giggles spontaneously with Matilda, one of her peers. But Matilda feels guilty about laughing because Father Leufredus, who helped raise her, did not approve of frivolity. So, Matilda tells Tildy, "It would be better for me to spend the time in prayer."

Tildy's response is profound: "I myself think laughing is mighty like praying... as if saying 'Listen, God, how much I enjoy this world You have made'" (Clarion Books, 2000, pp. 59).

Though laughter gives us a sweet taste of heaven, it's often a sampling swallowed when our mouths are already full of earth's acrid, bitter tastes. That's what makes laughter so amazing. People don't just laugh when their circumstances are favorable. In *Jump On Over! The Adventures of Brer Rabbit and His Family*, illustrator Barry Moser introduces readers to the tales told and retold by slaves in the American South. He says, "Overall, what has been most important to me is the underlying moral that brute strength is no match for cleverness, quickness, and the power of humor in times of

hardship. Wherever you are, you can find a laughing place..." (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1989, pp. vii). Author Mary Pipher supports Moser's thoughts. In her book *The Middle of Everywhere: The World's Refugees Come to Our Town*, she says, "Laughter is part of many healing systems. There is really no period in history when humans didn't laugh. Even during war there is laughter" (Harcourt, Inc., 2002, pp. 104).

Significant grounds for laughter

Christians know of an ongoing war with a known Victor, who gives them the most significant grounds for laughter. Humorist, speaker, and author Phil Callaway says, "As a Christian I have every reason to laugh, because the most serious issues were dealt with


when Jesus died on the cross. Death was swallowed up in victory. Eternity was promised. Surely the greatest punch line in history is this: that a holy God could love a guy like me" ("Laughing Matters," published in *Faith and Friends*, Oct. 2002).

A line in a Russian 19th century hymn articulately and simply sums up my unpolished prayer for laughing places: "Give us laughter, and set us daily rejoicing: praise to

you!" (Psalter Hymnal, CRC Publications, 1989, P.H. #595).

Sonya VanderVeen Feddema is a freelance writer who lives in St. Catharines, Ont.

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Church

India state enacts anti-conversion law

MADURAI, India — Christians in India are reeling from a new law passed by the Tamil Nadu state government banning forced or induced conversions. Seeing the work of the churches threatened, especially their relief work, the All India Council met in Madurai to plan protests against the restrictive legislation, and Christian leaders were joined by Islamic and Dalit (untouchable) leaders.

The ordinance, issued on October 5, bans religious conversions "by force, allurement or fraudulent means" without defining the terms. In the past, Hindu authorities have seen almost any form of ministry, from education to health or food aid, as 'allurement.' Violators are subject to three years' imprisonment, except in cases where the converts are minors, women, or members of scheduled castes or tribes. In those cases the imprisonment could extend to four years with an additional fine of 100,000 rupees (\$2000). In every instance, both the convert and the minister involved must report to the magistrate.

The ordinance follows the pattern of those passed by several

other states.

According to J.N. Manokaran of the India Missions Association, statistics do not warrant such a law. Census figures showed the Christian population at 5.69 per cent in 1991, down from 5.78 per cent in 1981 and 5.75 per cent in 1971.

Specifically targeted at Christians

Church leaders see the move toward the elimination of rights for religious minorities as specifically targeted at them, since the church runs a significant number of charitable institutions. These include colleges, schools, hospitals, clinics and vocational training institutes.

"Through these institutions the church wields a subversive clout and is able to make a considerable political and social impact on Indian society. This is immensely threatening to the vested interests of the hierarchical Hindu society in India," Rev. S. P. Thomas, a priest of the Mar Thomas Syrian Church, told Compass.

Christians fear the new law will hinder their free exercise of religion by embroiling them in restrictive regulations. They point out the

penalties are especially severe for converts among the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, which they believe was designed to thwart the conversion of Dalits to Christianity. The law may also encourage many to bring false charges against Christian ministers and intimidate new believers. Some fear that chapel services in Christian schools, hospitals and children's homes may even be viewed as violating the new law.

India's constitution guarantees freedom of religion. "This ordinance is a violation of human rights," Manokaran told Christian Aid. "Human beings have the freedom to choose in what they believe, object of worship and manner of worship. This right cannot be deprived from anybody, including women and members of the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes."

The National Council of Churches in India, which groups 29 Protestant and Orthodox churches, said the law threatened to undermine constitutional rights and would create mistrust between religious communities.

Hard to do humanitarian work

"The law will also make it difficult for the churches in Tamil Nadu and religious NGOs [non-governmental organizations] to work for social and economic justice and even for humanitarian relief," the Council said, calling on the state government to repeal the measure.

The All India Christian Council, a grouping of lay Christian leaders, said it would challenge the ordinance in court. "Various state governments that have raised the bogey of induced or forcible conversions have failed to find even a single such case in the past," it said.

"We are concerned about this. This [law] could be misused to curb the genuine exercise of freedom of conscience which is a fundamental right," Archbishop Vincent Concessao of Delhi, senior vice president of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India, told

journalists.

After the meeting in Madurai on Wednesday, October 10, to create a plan of action, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Madurai, M. Arokiasamy, appealed for people in India and around the world to condemn the "fascist ordinance," which he said went against the basic tenets of the Indian constitution. He also asked people to express their anguish at being let down by a Government which had won the election on a "secular plank."

The group then announced that the minorities would organize a fast in all district headquarters on October 19 and their institutions would remain closed throughout the Tamil Nadu state on October 24 to, as a spokesperson said, "To express our bitterness and agony."

[A composite of stories from Assist News Service, ENI, Compass and Christian Aid.]

Churches say development needed to aid peace process in Sri Lanka

Anto Akkara

NEW DELHI, India (ENI) — Church leaders and Christian activists in Sri Lanka have said that action to rebuild war-ravaged areas and restore the economy is now needed to assist the government's bid to seek peace after 19 years of armed conflict.

At the same time "Bringing Children Home" an international conference on children affected by armed conflict, convened in Colombo. The Tamil Tigers, the rebel group fighting in the armed conflict, are said to have recruited children.

Shift from suspicion to trust

Welcoming the peace talks, Duleep de Chickera, Anglican bishop of Colombo, said: "Now there is a gradual shift from suspicion to trust."

"Despite the positive change in the culture of violence," Chickera warned, the "peace rhetoric does not have any meaning for most people, especially the poor in the conflict areas, who measure peace with development."

Though everyone was happy about a recent exchange of 20 prisoners by the Liberation Tigers of



A Tamil Tiger at work.

conflict that has since 1983 claimed nearly 65,000 lives.

Total devastation

Observed Marshal Fernando, director of the Ecumenical Institute for Study and Dialogue in Colombo returning from a visit to the rebel controlled area: "The people there [in the north] are living in primitive conditions. The devastation there is total."

Father Oswald B. Firth, director of Centre for Society and Religion in Colombo, said non-governmental organizations, including churches, needed to focus on compensating those whose lives had been ruined by the ethnic conflict.

Besides the displaced Tamils (estimated to be 1.5 million), the Catholic priest pointed out that many Sinhala villages bordering the areas under Tamil Tiger control had also suffered great devastation and thousands of families in them had lost members in the war.

The LTTE has aided the peace process by saying it is prepared to give up its demand for an independent Tamil homeland and to settle for regional autonomy and self-government.

Churches in Sri Lanka mobilize for peace

Anto Akkara

NEW DELHI, India (ENI) — As the Sri Lankan government prepared for historic peace talks with Tamil rebels, churches in the island nation are mustering support for the peace process, even in the face of opposition by hard-liners from the Sinhalese majority.

Representatives of the Sri Lankan government and the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam), known as the Tamil Tigers, met for talks in Thailand from September 16 to 18 in an attempt to resolve a two decade-old ethnic conflict that has claimed nearly 65,000 lives.

Several Sinhalese fundamentalist groups held demonstrations in Colombo, the capital, on September 6 to protest the government's decision to lift a ban against the Tamil Tigers. The removal of the ban had been demanded by the Tamil Tigers as a precondition to peace talks.

A bloody campaign

Since 1983, the Tamil Tigers have spearheaded a bloody campaign for an independent homeland for the Tamil minority in Sri Lanka, saying that Tamils were dominated by the Sinhalese-speaking Buddhist majority.

Based in the south of the country, the Sinhalese population accounts for more than 70 per cent of Sri Lanka's 19 million people. Tamils, a minority living mostly in the north and east of the country, make up 17 per cent of the population.

In a statement released September 6, the National Christian Council of Sri Lanka hailed "wholeheartedly the peace talks [and] the gesture of the government to de-proscribe the LTTE prior to the commencement of the [peace] talks."

The Rev. Ebenezer Joseph, the council's general secretary, told ENI: "It is not enough for us to just say we support the peace process. We are taking grass roots-level action to educate the people on the peace process."

In an effort to build support among the general population, Ebenezer said, the council had printed hundreds of peace posters and more than 20,000 booklets for distribution through member churches.

Norwegian mediation led to the signing in February of the first formal cease-fire agreement between the Sri Lankan government and the Tamil Tigers since the conflict started in 1983.

Church

U.S. church leaders denounce Falwell's 'hateful' words against Muhammad

NEW YORK, N.Y. (ENI) — A wide range of U.S. religious organizations have condemned comments made by the U.S. evangelical leader Jerry Falwell, who in a nationally televised interview broadcast on Sunday called the Islamic prophet Muhammad a "terrorist".

"Jesus set the example for love, as did Moses, and I think Muhammad set an opposite example," Falwell, who is known for making provocative statements, said in the interview broadcast on the CBS news program "60 Minutes".

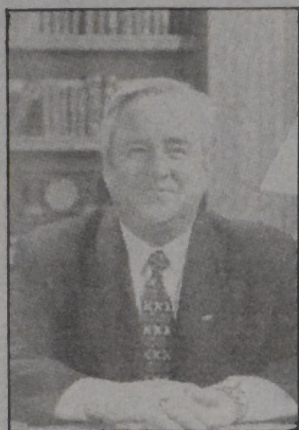
A violent man of war

"I think Muhammad was a terrorist," he said, calling the prophet "a violent man, a man of war."

In a statement issued on Monday while meeting in New York, the executive board of the National Council of Churches (USA), the nation's biggest ecumenical agency, called Falwell's statements "hateful," "destructive" and "inflammatory".

"Jerry Falwell's words [are] not Christian and shockingly uninformed," the board said in a statement.

The NCC board also suggested



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Jerry Falwell

the statements could harm Christian-Muslim relations in nations with religious tensions. They could also have the effect of putting the lives of Christian missionaries and humanitarian aid workers at risk, the board said.

Several days later, Mr. Falwell issued an apology: "I sincerely apologize that certain statements of mine made during an interview for the Sept. 30 edition of CBS's 60

Minutes were hurtful to the feelings of many Muslims. I intended no disrespect to any sincere, law-abiding Muslim."

An Iranian newspaper on Tuesday called for the death of Falwell, "recalling the religious decree pronounced against Salman Rushdie", according to an Agence France-Presse (AFP) report. But clergy in Iran only went so far as to call the faithful "not to remain silent", said the news agency, citing an Iranian radio report.

Flagrant insult is unacceptable

"This flagrant insult is unacceptable, and Islamic countries should stop their oil exports and cut their relations with the United States," said Hossein Nouri-Hamedani, an important ayatollah, at a mosque in the northern Iranian city of Qom, AFP reported.

In the US, Jewish and Muslim leaders also rebuked Falwell, with Abraham Foxman, the director of the New York-based Anti-Defamation League, a Jewish group, calling Falwell's charge "outrageous", and saying Falwell owed "an apology to the millions of good people who follow the Muslim faith. As a

man of the cloth, he should be working toward bringing faith communities closer together, not driving wedges through them."

Ziad Asali, president of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, urged Christians and Jews to "strongly and forthrightly condemn this sustained campaign of hatred, defamation and vilification against Islam coming from the evangelical Christian right".

"This growing campaign of prejudice needs to be confronted and repudiated before it can spread any further," he said.

Leaders in the two main branches of Islam have welcomed an apology from Rev. Jerry Falwell, the conservative American Baptist minister who angered Muslims by calling the founder of their religion a terrorist.

Rev. Falwell "deserves thanks for his return to the righteous path," said a statement from Mohammed Sayed Tantawi, the grand sheik of Al-Azhar, a Sunni Muslim mosque in Cairo.

In the Iranian city of Qom, an important Shiite Muslim centre of learning, a high-ranking cleric said Rev. Falwell had shown courage.

"A person courageous enough to apologize for his errors is worthy of praise," Ayatollah Hussein Mousavi Tabrizi said.

Falwell is one of several conservative US Christian leaders who have issued harshly critical statements about Islam since the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in the US. The Rev. Pat Robertson, the television evangelist and former presidential candidate, earlier called Muhammad "an absolute wild-eyed fanatic."

Falwell's remarks were broadcast all over the Muslim and Arab world. Religious parties in Pakistan called to all Muslims to hold protest rallies on Friday (October 11) throughout the country. Thousands of people in the Muslim-majority Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir took to the streets to protest Falwell's comments. Angry protesters shouted anti-American epithets and forced stores in some cities to close for a time over what they said were Falwell's "derogatory and blasphemous remarks," the Associated Press reported.

[Composite of stories by Chris Herlinger of ENI and stories from Globalvision News.]

Christians and Muslims tell each other they need to face differences

Laurie Spurr

GENEVA (ENI) — Muslims and Christians should not play down their religious differences but rather face them and learn to respect them, a leading Orthodox prelate told international political and religious leaders gathered here on Wednesday.

"Religious identity is stronger than ethnic or cultural identity. It tends to build walls between people. However, we cannot allow these walls to stand," asserted Aram I, Catholicos of Cilicia, who is co-moderator of a three-day international inter-faith conference in Geneva sponsored by the World Council of Churches (WCC).

Called "Christians and Muslims in Dialogue and Beyond," the meeting brings together top religious and political leaders from Muslim-majority countries such as Iran, Libya, Nigeria and Saudi Arabia, and Christian-majority countries in Europe and North America with the aim of building mutual trust between the faiths and finding ways to live together.

Dialogue between Muslims and

Christians has taken on renewed urgency because more people than ever before are living in communities with members of other religions. Also, fundamentalism is taking root in many places around the world, said Aram I, a member of the Armenian Apostolic Church and moderator of the WCC's main governing body.

No easy compromise

"We must not fall into the temptation of understating the existing differences in order to effect an easy compromise," said the Lebanon-based Orthodox clergyman, pointing to what he called "significant differences" in the "moral and social values" of the two religions as well as in their theological teachings.

Christians and Muslims interpret liberty, democracy and human rights differently, he said, with "concrete implications to our communities living together in one place". The two religions, he said, also "perceive the nature and role of religion, civil society and the state quite differently."

"We must be courageous in accepting our differences. In fact, we are different in many respects and we should remain so," he said.

Abdelouahed Belkeziz, secretary-general of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, said, however, that with the spread of modern education and science, "partial doctrinal differences between Islam and Christianity have started to decline."

"Consequently, we should be able to narrow our differences, particularly as we all belong to the people of the Scriptures, and are followers of revealed religions which all stem from a common source," the Saudi-based theologian asserted.

The conference is the latest in a series of inter-faith dialogues that have been held world-wide, in such cities as Assisi, Atlanta, Cairo and Johannesburg, after the 2001 terrorist attacks in the US. For the WCC, it represents the most recent effort in more than 30 years of promoting

Aram I in his address said that the Geneva dialogue set out to in-

crease mutual understanding so that the two communities could come to trust one another.

Reject arrogance

He called for conference participants to "reject ignorance, arrogance and pride" and to "break through our isolation, our self-centredness and our self-sufficiency", calling the dialogue "an

invitation to live life responsibly".

In places where Christians are a minority, he said, governments have to develop systems "based on equal rights and full participation."

In communities where Muslims are a minority, a lack of interaction between Muslims and Christians "breeds mistrust, intolerance and, potentially, violence," said Aram I.



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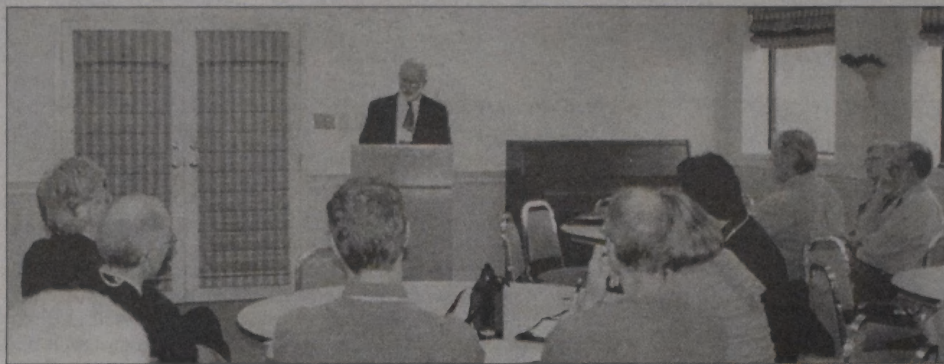
News

Runner conference reflects on a 50-year legacy

Harry der Nederlanden

Over 40 years after they sat in his classes as students, they still speak of him with deep emotion — and gratitude — for the profound impact he had not just on their academic careers but on their lives. Some 75 scholars and others gathered at Redeemer University College, Oct. 4 and 5 to reflect on the legacy of Dr. H. Evan Runner. The conference, planned after his death last March, was sponsored by the Institute for Christian Studies (in many ways fathered by him), Redeemer, King's, Dordt, Trinity and Calvin colleges, where he made the halls resonate with Calvinistic philosophy for 30 years.

Although it was planned primarily as a conference at which scholars from different disciplines would speak of the influence of Runner's ideas (openly borrowed for the most part from Vollenhoven



James Skillen, from the Washington-based Center for Public Justice, speaks at the Runner conference.

and Dooyeweerd), the organizers also scheduled an evening tribute or thanksgiving service for the man, which drew several hundred additional people from the area. Calvin Seerveld, recently retired from the ICS, led the service with a medita-

tion on Isaiah 54 and Jeremiah 31.

In his reflection, Seerveld drew on the Old Testament passages to remind us that it is necessary for followers of the Lord to feel estranged, excluded, at odds with their time. Yet, those Israelites who

were captives in Babylon were told it is a time to sing. "God tells Jeremiah," said Seerveld, "that it's time to stop blaming others and to become a *tzadik*, giving out love and ideas."

Runner, he suggested, was such

a *tzadik*, and the presence of so many children of faith testifies to the truth of God's promises in Isaiah that he will bless the faithful. Hebrews 11, however, is not a list of heroes but of misfits. And we will be similarly blessed, not by living out of a Christian philosophy or worldview, but out of Jesus' resurrection and the hope of his coming again.

Prophetic contribution

Gerald Vandezande, former Public Affairs Director of Citizens for Public Justice, celebrated Runner's prophetic contribution to the early days of CPJ. He proclaimed an integral cultural vision that called for radical redemption and restoration of human affairs. He taught us, said Vandezande, that the most fundamental battle is not for the conservation of the church

Continued on page 11...

Runner, the Irish scrapper

Harry der Nederlanden

Besides the lectures held in the main auditorium, the conference on Runner's legacy also offered quite a number of short sessions focusing on different disciplines. Three or four would be running at the same time, so there was no way to visit all of them, nor would anyone have the patience to read

through such a long report. But no matter, for in CC we will keep coming back to the central themes hammered out by Runner, not because we are his "disciples" but because anyone approaching world events and culture with a Christian worldview will almost certainly have been influenced by the ideas he promoted so enthusiastically.

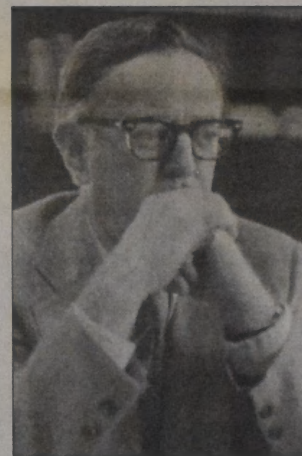
Among the list of organizations impacted by Runner and company, *Christian Courier* also takes a place.

Runner no solo act

The influence that the CRC community exercises in Canada and the U.S. — through almost any and all of the institutions it has founded and through the writings of individuals these have educated and employed — has to some extent been shaped by the Kuyperian vision of Runner. But, as Seerveld said, "He was no solo act." He was part of a tradition that preceded him and a community that supported him and worked alongside of him. (And Runner was not always easy to work alongside of.)

We have often sought to define the nature and the criteria of such influence too narrowly, quickly detecting synthesis, syncretism and nature-grace dualisms elsewhere (for the uninitiated: these are all tests for impurities). This, too, is part of the Runner legacy. Runner's son and namesake, invited to speak at the conference, scolded some of us, perhaps most of us, for not remaining true to his father's legacy, for example, by (mis)interpreting Scripture to allow for women in office and homosexual unions. In this, he was following in his father's footsteps, defying protocol to speak the truth as he sees it. That's a mixed blessing.

Most of us would not want to draw the circle that tight, not any more. During the first week I came to Calvin as a mature student (1967), when I began talking about



Dr. H. Evan Runner

some ideas of Nick Wolterstorff with some of Runner's boys, I was quickly informed that "he is not one of us." It was one of those moments that lodges in your head. I was quite aware at the time that Wolterstorff was not a "Dooyeweerdian," but I felt quite sure that he was indeed "one of us."

He relished a good intellectual scrap

There was a little of the Irish scrapper in Runner. He relished a good intellectual scrap, and he could get in some pretty good licks at "those other guys" teaching down the hall or in the seminary. And many of us imitated him; in fact, some of us became caricatures of him, attacking other professors in the classroom when they committed a dualism. Some of this was

not bad — the stuff of academic debate since scholarship began — but some of it was. Some of it was sectarian.

But this does not belong to the heart of Runner's teaching, which was ecumenical in the best sense of the word. Although ecclesiastical creeds might continue to divide Christ-believers, Runner believed that if Christians were directed by biblical principles in the field where they worked, they would soon discover the true source of their unity beneath denominational differences.

Although technical Dooyeweerdian philosophy has not traveled far beyond Dutch Reformed circles, the worldview emphasis in which Runner excelled did. Men like Charles Colson and John Bolt work cooperatively with predominantly Roman Catholic thinkers, for example. Christian colleges of various traditions in North America are looking to Calvin as a model and adapting an academic structure rooted in worldview thinking. The International Association for the Promotion of Christian Higher Education has been led by two men, both associated with Dordt College, John Vander Stelt and John B. Hulst, who were gripped by the same vision, and IAPCHE has encouraged Christian scholars in Africa, Latin America, India and many other parts of the world.

As it becomes global, "Runner's legacy" will almost certainly change, for if it is indeed a part of God's mission, it is the legacy, not of Runner's spirit, but of the Holy Spirit. So let it be.

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News



Dr. Justin Cooper (left) and Dr. Calvin Seerveld talk with another conference participant.

... continued from page 10

but for human society in its totality. He quoted from a speech Runner gave to the CLAC in 1967:

"The most fundamental battle of our time is not to be thought of in the first place as one for the preservation of a familiar and so-called orthodox church organization, or of an abstract system of theological propositions. The struggle of our time goes much deeper: it is a struggle for the religious direction of human society in its totality.

The battle of our time

"The battle of our time — as indeed of any time — is to determine which spirit is to give direction to our civilization. A church organization, or a world of Christian theological activity, standing alone within a culture all the other activities of which are directed by an anti-Christian spirit must remain impotent and has become irrelevant, and it will in the long run fade away. Even to preserve the organized church therefore we must fight for an integral Christian society.

Either there is a quickening of faith, which senses the religious unity of life, or there is the quiet accommodation, in almost imperceptible stages, to a way of life which does not, cannot, hear the Good Shepherd's voice. This is the quiet of the dead."

Vandezande challenged those present to follow Runner's legacy and to work for a true pluralism

that breaks with the dogmas of humanism. Runner proposed that we develop a society "where the fact of a plurality of faiths ... is recognized, and the totalitarian demand a faith makes upon him who confesses it to give order to the whole of his life will be accepted in a straightforward way."

Vandezande challenged us to persist "both in the basic *direction* of our daily life and in the diverse *structures* of our society.

"This God-ordained responsibility is our common calling," he concluded. "It is our cultural ministry for the common good."

Harry Antonides, former Director of Research and Education for the CLAC, recalled the early days of the CLAC; in a desire to be led by Christian principles, the founders recognized a kindred spirit in Runner. Twice they invited him to give the keynote speech for CLAC conventions. He sought to instill in all who would listen that Christ is Lord of all and that we are engaged in a battle of the spirits. Those who came to hear him, said Antonides, may not have understood every nuance, but they understood the spirit out of which Runner spoke and the cherished his vision as good news for a broken world.

H. Evan Runner Chair in Philosophy established

At the opening ceremonies of the conference, Justin Cooper, President of Redeemer, announced that Redeemer has been given a

special endowment to enable it to establish a H. Evan Runner Chair in Philosophy. Last year, the ICS similarly honored Runner, naming a chair in the history of philosophy after him. Bob Sweetman, the first to occupy the ICS chair, gave the summing up lecture at the conference.

The opening lecture was given by Al Wolters, Professor of Theology at Redeemer, who pointed out that he began his career in the chair in the history of philosophy at the ICS intended for Runner. It was Runner, said Wolters, who originally steered him toward philosophy, and he owed to the club mentored by Runner, the Groen Club, the commitment that has motivated him.

Yet, paradoxically, he pointed out, Runner would be regarded as an academic failure in scholarly circles, for he never published anything in his field after his dissertation. Everything he did publish was written for a general audience for speeches at special occasions. Although celebrated as a teacher, his pedagogy was poor: he seldom followed the syllabus (course outline) and he never completed it. In fact, if it hadn't been for the Canadian students, he'd have lost his position at Calvin.

Nevertheless, he had a huge impact on several generations of students, especially Canadians, and he inspired many with a Christian vision of the academic enterprise. What he taught was not so much

philosophy as worldview, using this as a springboard to launch students to reform all of culture.

What made him so effective?

What made him so effective? Asked Wolters.

Passion — Runner had a sense of mission, a missionary zeal and a prophetic style. The gospel was envisioned as a transforming power.

Erudition — Runner read very widely, far beyond his fields of expertise — the classics, theology and philosophy — so he could give his students guidance in various fields.

Strategic sense — Runner deployed his "troops" like a general, pointing them toward strategic disciplines.

Personal relationships — Runner established a deep bond with many of his students, creating disciples, counseling them on several levels.

The central themes of Runner's teaching, said Wolters, were not original with him but were borrowed from Dutch neo-Calvinism. His big theme was "Life is religion," which meant no two realm theology, with reason supposedly neutral. Rationality is not what all

humans have in common, because it is shaped by one's religion. What humans have in common is the law order upheld by God's (common) grace. In his faithfulness God upholds the structure of his creation; only the direction of our lives has been deflected by sin.

Runner invoked an overall picture of a constant but dynamic world order moving toward the restoration and consummation of creation.

This vision didn't just inspire academics; his teachings had an impact on Christian schools, the CLAC, the Christian Farmers Organization, as well as on the Christian Reformed Church, and his influence has extended to other countries as well, to Korea and Japan. By way of the Center for Public Justice, it reaches even into the Bush administration on matters such as education vouchers and public funds for faith-based organizations.

Wolters summed up: "Runner burned with a holy zeal for the coming of God's Kingdom; he was a man of God who testified in person and in his teaching to the powerful grace of God."

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Personal Reflections

The cemetery

Ron de Boer

You might think I'm weird, but I count cemeteries as among my favorite places to visit. I can't think of a more appropriate place to think and reflect on life, the mortality of those I love, and God's place in the world.

I usually ask the kids if they want to join me; a couple of groans, a "yeah right!" but at least one always agrees. It's become sort of a weekly family devotion. We'll stroll or bike the pristine paths of the huge cemetery near our house, reading and sometimes giggling at the names (Noschair is their favorite), considering the dates, and figuring out the ages and the relationships the tombstones have to each other.

Wind in the pines

In our cemetery, I always find myself at two locations. One is a corner shadowed by towering pine trees where little white crosses stand row on row. They are soldiers who died fighting during World War II. The wind in the pines is all you hear as you stand reading the dates on these young men's graves and imagine the horrors of war. Yet, having been raised by parents who remember all too well the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands, I always feel uneasy standing before these white crosses. They are the graves of German prisoners of war.

"Maybe God loved them so much he wanted them back."

The other location you could easily miss — an overgrown, forgotten corner running along a rusty fence at the back end of the cemetery — the tiny gravestones of children and infants, little decapitated angels and chipped doves with the word "BABY" etched on the front or "BABY THOMPSON, August 11, 1953." Three days lived here, a still-born over there. Most without names. What were the purposes of these little lives, I ask aloud, and the eight year old says in complete sincerity: "Maybe God loved them so much he wanted them back." Out of the mouths of babes?

Heaven's the championship

Cemeteries aren't Karen's thing. She tells me she's a future-oriented person. I remind her that the cemetery is in all our futures! She'd rather visit a maternity ward, stare at those wrinkled little bundles all lying peacefully or crying mightily, row on row, in their little baskets — the beginning of the life cycle. Shakespeare lamented in his "All the World's a Stage" sonnet that we come into the world drooling and crying and we leave the world in the same way. Perhaps Karen and I are philosophizing about the same



Carefully crafted monuments proclaiming earthly significance.

HARRY DER NEDERLANDEN PHOTOS (4)

issues when we consider just the living and the dead.

C. S. Lewis said death doesn't scare him — dying does. As Christians, we believe that once you've breathed your last, you'll find yourself in the afterlife — a much better place, we're all agreed. After all, we've worked hard our whole lives to get to the big show and now we've made it. Heaven's the championship after the long grueling season.

Yet, it's not surprising that anyone not believing in God would want to mark their deaths so significantly with towering granite structures with long epitaphs remembering their lives. In one cemetery in our city, the WEBER family has created a veritable shrine to themselves, a lavishly arched area with carefully crafted monuments proclaiming to the public their earthly significance. They had money; streets were named after them; boy, did they turn heads when they walked downtown. Yet, they'll walk through the pearly gates clothed in the same humility and nakedness as those little nameless stillborns with the thistles covering their flat tombstones.

God doesn't care a lick if your name adorns the letterhead of a big company or if you were never issued a name; only that you're etched into the Book — that special book where we learned as kids He carefully writes in our names if we've received his grace. Those kids without names? If God can name the sparrows, then he certainly knows every little son or daughter who

didn't live after they were born, and all the children not honored with a grave — those who were aborted before their mother's first trimester.

Power of the cross

If you visit cemeteries often, you see some interesting responses to death. One day in April, my thirteen year old and I were killing some time between basketball games at a tournament in London, Ontario, when we happened past a Roman Catholic cemetery, perhaps the most beautiful resting place I've ever visited.

When we entered, a larger-than-scale stone Jesus hung on a cross, flanked by two other crosses. Seeing him there at the entrance to this place of remembrance for all who had died — dying the ultimate death — stopped me in my tracks. Seldom have I felt so deeply the power of the cross.

As we began our journey, we noticed little poles with platforms along the path. On the platforms were etched a moment in the crucifixion scene, a reminder that through Christ's death, all those lying in those graves could — if they chose to believe in

Christ's death and resurrection — have eternal life. Wow.

Companionship after death

As we reflected on this, we heard singing. We rounded a bend, ascended a foothill and below us, beside a little grove of trees, stood five or six people circling a grave and boisterously belting out "Happy Birthday." After they clambered back into a mini-van, we descended on the grave-site. Sure enough, April 11, 1977 stared back at us from the salmon colored, speckled grave stone.

If you ever bike or walk through a cemetery — especially on Sunday evenings — you'll notice many people, usually women, tending the graves of their loved ones. They water the flowers, pull weeds, and even polish the headstone. This summer, in the cemetery near my house, I've noticed one particular woman who does all of the above, then, when the sun is casting long shadows over the cemetery and the birds are filling the

trees, she takes out a lawn chair, and, facing the headstone, reads the newspaper until dark. Companionship does not end after death.

In August, Karen and I took the kids to Nova Scotia for a couple of weeks. We had rented a big farmhouse along the ocean about a half hour or so from Lunenburg. On our several trips to Halifax and Peggy's Cove along the beautiful Lighthouse Trail, I noticed a little overgrown cemetery with a foot-high picket fence and an archway that read "Old Burial Ground 1825."

The headstones whisper stories

Early one morning I drove out to visit this cemetery and was astounded by the age of the tombstones. The ones that were legible had died in the late 1800s and the old ones — literally stones propped upright with shapes that defied any craftsmanship — poked up from beneath long grass and weeds. The headstones whisper stories. If you spend some time in a cemetery, you begin to make connections between the tombstones. You might notice a single family's tragedy of losing more than one loved one — was it a farm accident, a fire? You will see the long gaps of



Scenes from a cemetery. At right is a headstone with five children in one family. All died young.

Personal Reflections/Sports



time between the deaths of husbands and wives. A woman might be widowed at 35 and not die until her eighties. Did she remarry? No evidence of it in this grave yard.

Outlived them all

A couple of years ago, I took my senior writing class to a cemetery for inspiration and material. One of my students pointed out a man's headstone and beside it were his three wives, each dying a decade apart. He had outlived them all.

In the little burial ground along that stretch of highway in Nova Scotia, Lemuel Drew died March 20, 1864 at the age of 63. Seven or eight paces to his left, Lemuel's firstborn son — also Lemuel Drew — died May 28, 1895 at 73. And beside Lemuel the 2nd, lies Lemuel Drew the 3rd, who died in 1914 at the age of 45.

The next day, while visiting a fishing museum in Lunenburg, the names of fishermen who'd died at sea are listed in the hundreds at the turn of the 20th century. Lemuel Drew finds himself among their numbers, along with many other Drews and Conrads that came off the boats during this land's early history.

Two slim stones tell the story

Later in the week, just outside of Peggy's Cove, we visited the memorial of the Swissair flight 111 disaster. On September 2nd, 1998, an airliner crashed into the ocean near Peggy Cove's coast, killing all passengers and crew on board.

Two slim stones point toward the communities — Peggy's Cove and Bay's Water — that opened their doors to the families of those who had died, and the space between them points toward the cold waters of the Atlantic Ocean, to the crash site of SwissAir flight 111. Even if you didn't know anyone on board that airplane, you couldn't help feeling a sense of grief looking over that watery grave. You begin reflecting on all the circumstances that lead to those college kids, grandmothers and young families who decided to buy a ticket to that airplane on September 2, not knowing they were purchasing their remaining days on earth.

Backyard cemetery

Back home now, we've started a cemetery of our own. Our two gerbils, Ebony and Ivory — replacement pets for a golden retriever who had wreaked havoc on our household earlier this year — died a week apart. One morning, the kids found Ebony cold and stiff in the cage. I carried her out, dug a hole in the shade of the pine trees lining the back of our yard, and lay her to rest. We stuck a stick in marking the spot. The eight and four year old cried big tears.

A week later we noticed Ivory's slow movements. A day later, her shiny white fur turned greyish. Gone were her big, bright oil-drop eyes; now her eyes were pinched shut. A few hours later, she had moved a few inches and continued to breathe but was all but gone. The kids watched her die slowly and exploded in grief and anger when I suggested I put her out of her misery. The next morning, we lay Ebony beside her best friend, Ivory, and stuck another stick in the pine needles. The four year old still prays for them.

In it all, I've learned that cemeteries are a dichotomy. On the one hand, we believe our earthly bodies and deeds are insignificant, so building shrines to the deceased seems utterly insignificant. Yet, I see the purpose of cemeteries for those still living. They are sites to place our grief, to humble ourselves before Death. They also give us a sense of history, a glimpse of the past, and as historians have said, we are doomed if we forget the past.

That's the dash

Most headstones have two dates — the day of birth and of death — separated by a dash. I've heard it said that birth and death dates mean little; it's how you spend your dash! Aristotle said all things have a beginning, a middle and an end, but the middle is the most difficult part to write or create or live. From the maternity ward to the cemetery, we're all called to be disciples of God. That's the dash.

After the Buzzer

Tim Antonides



The enforcers

Donald Brashear is not pretty. He's not a very gifted hockey player either. He gets paid by the Philadelphia Flyers to do what he does best — throw punches at people. During a preseason game, he sent Sandy McCarthy of the Rangers to the dressing room, but not before cracking Sandy's helmet in half.

Brashear is scary. There are a few scary boys in the NHL though, and there always have been. Who could forget Dave Semenko — the guy who the Oilers sent on the ice to protect Wayne Gretzky? And Dave Schultz. In the '70s, he was one of the guys that the Flyers used to send a physical message. To enforce the law.

Some are tougher than others

The enforcers. They're a big part of the game, and every team has one. It seems every team needs one. Some are just tougher than others.

On the campus of my university last week, an old guy stood outside in the middle of campus and started preaching. His message was simple and direct. Drinking, drugs, and sexual immorality were stepping stones to hell. As a crowd of at least 100 students listened, he admonished them.

"How many of you drink alcohol?" he yelled.

Almost all the hands went up.

"Alcohol is a tool of the devil," he told them.

A lot of the people in the crowd started screaming obscenities and threatening him. He just kept preaching.

Easy answers to tough questions

My wife and I moved here this summer, and we've settled into a church community. We went to a wide range of churches first. In some, answers to religious dilemmas were answered with surprising ease. Teenagers should only listen to Christian music. Men should not wear earrings. All alcohol use grieves the Holy Spirit.

One gentleman informed me that not only is America God's chosen people but that George W. Bush is a God-fearing man and therefore if he thinks Iraq should be invaded, we should do it. At a fundamentalist school I taught at in central B.C., a student wrote a paper about how Halloween is a time when young children are forced to worship Satan.

Some believers break down their faith into prescriptive rituals and rules and insist that everyone else does the same. It is incredibly easy to mock and sully this form of Christianity.

I'll admit that black-and-white solutions to very complex theological debates make me sick. It's hard to hold my tongue around Christians such as these. I'm so repulsed and embarrassed by the witness they bring.

But then, maybe I'm just a repulsive. I wonder how many times I've been too scared to share my faith in case someone hurts my precious feelings or won't like me anymore.

We need to voice of enforcers

Meanwhile, the old man stands in the middle of campus urging students to avoid sexual promiscuity because God wants them to have healthy bodies and relationships. Imagine how that message goes over at a large state university.

Many of us have become dependent on fundamentalist enforcers. I may not agree with some of their Scriptural interpretations, but I need a voice in the culture to say, "That's against God's will."

I need enforcers to go out and initiate debate. I need The Christian Coalition and other ultra-Conservative groups to put political pressure on the government to follow Christian principles. That way I can sit back, snicker at their theological simplicity and go back to hiding in the thin shadows that lie between obedience and shame — all the while soaking my feet in a lukewarm pool of mediocrity.

We can enforce or we can avoid, but there is another option. Maybe we can boldly step out in obedience without cracking somebody's head.



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Christian Living

Why go to church? (7)

To carry the world to God

A.A. van Ruler

When we go to church, we don't leave the world behind. We take it along in all its particulars and totality. We touched on this topic last time, but it bears a closer look.

What do we do with this world when we're sitting in the pew? We said that there we experience it in its fullest potency and intensity. Special revelation teaches us what everything really is, and we acknowledge and affirm the truth of this reality. We confess this truth, visit with God and take to heart what is said about him. And then we play. We perform a play about the whole world and its reality. This we do in the sociodrama of the liturgy.

But then we add something very important. We take up that world and carry it to God - in our prayers. All prayer is in a sense intercession for the world.

We can plead on behalf of a person or set forth a case about some issue. In our worship services we represent the world to God and make a case in its behalf.

Turning the world over to God

We can carry the world to God in order to get it off our hands, to pass the burden from our shoulders to God's. Then we are rid of the responsibility and leave it up to God what's to be done with it.

Is that what we do when we carry the world to God in prayer? Let's not be too hasty to answer. No. The answer is more complicated. On the most fundamental level we must say Yes. Basically it is true that in our prayers we turn our dealings in the world and thus the world itself over to the Lord.

A person who prays is practically aware that he doesn't bear ultimate responsibility for the world. He is responsible - not for but to reality as a whole, that is, to God. This responsibility is discharged ultimately at the last judgment but only for what he has done personally. So he is responsible for his own small role in the big drama of world history. He is not responsible for the whole world.

He is not Atlas, bearing the weight of the entire world on his shoulders. This posture may be heroic but it is not Christian. The Christian is also not a fanatic who takes on the world in the name of his absolute principles. Nor is he an idealist who dedicates his life to the betterment of the world on the basis of his own values and ideals. But neither is he a fatalist who takes everything as it comes be-

cause that's the way it goes. And he is certainly not a numbskull who pays no attention to what is happening around him and lives in happy ignorance about a world that will go on quite well without him. No, the Christian is involved with the world, but fundamentally he hands it over to God. He does so by carrying it to God in prayer.

This is, however, to look on a foundational level. On the surface it looks very different. Even as we pray, we remain plugged in. We are co-workers with God; we keep our tasks and remain responsible for them. They are tasks in the world, a world that belongs to God. This remains true even as we are praying. The saying is true: ora et labora, pray and work.

Nothing outside the Creator's interest

In our prayers our work becomes working in God's workplace. It even becomes working along to realize what we pray for. Anyone who prays, "Give us this day our daily bread," must also labor to earn a living.

In all simplicity, prayer is talking things over - everything over - with God. When we think about what this means, we can't help but be amazed, for it means that there is nothing too trivial or ordinary that we cannot talk it over with God. Our Creator and Redeemer is interested in everything in his world. That's why everything in this world, even the most mundane, is holy, right down to the pebble tumbling in the creek. There is nothing that falls outside the Creator's interest. This is the deep sense of reality that is part of the Hebrew, Christian faith.

Talking with God presupposes a democratic, specifically parliamentary, relationship. The word "parliament" contains the French word for to speak, "parler". To pray is a heightened form of talking: it is to talk things over with God, just as the people talk over matters of government in the house of commons.

The right to make amendments

We can take this comparison further. We have the right to take the initiative. To pray also involves putting our plans and proposals before God. The Apostle Paul says we should make all our wishes and desires known to God. We must not turn our hearts into a pit in which we trap and kill off our deepest feelings. We must bring them to the light; we must turn ourselves



Durer's engraving: The Prodigal Son

inside out before God.

We also have the right to make amendments. No one really agrees with God in everything. We often think we know better, or in any case, we often want them to turn out differently than God makes it happen. And so we are allowed to propose changes in God's government. We do this, for example, when we pray for the end of a war or of the hostility between races.

It is even possible to enter a motion of non-confidence. Prayer can take the form of an argument between us and God. Usually this concerns the dark abyss of human suffering. And there are also the even darker depths of our guilt. But we can sometimes put the latter

aside to address the Lord God about all the terrible suffering in the world. This involves all sorts of terrible things from bodily pain to spiritual agony and irreparable loss. But most terrible of all is the fact that they are contrary to all the promises God has made about his world. Things simply don't come out right. Is God a liar? Isn't a motion of non-confidence justified? The Bible is full of such complaints and charges, especially in the Psalms.

Ruling the world with God

The most amazing thing is that this parliament does participate in the government of the world in

some way. This is an essential part of prayer. To pray is to mess with the eternal counsel of God. It is a form of ruling the world alongside of him. That's how God's kingdom comes: God rules the world through the prayers of his saints. In a certain sense, our prayers keep the world in shape. That there are orders or communities in Christianity devoted exclusively or primarily to prayer is, therefore, hardly surprising.

In other words, we are not driven by a dark necessity or fate. The ground of our being is a person who is conscious and willing and who can be called love.

We must remember that we are talking *with* God, so he is talking

Christian Living/Family

too. Prayer is, therefore, also listening. It is a back and forth sort of activity. Prayer is a conversation, the highest form of conversation. It is more than a conversation *within* being (with your neighbor); it is a conversation about being (with God). But if our prayer life is good, it is a conversation in which God gets to speak now and then.

But is our prayer life good? Here we touch a sensitive spot. Does God speak to us in our prayers? This is something different than hearing and answering our prayers. It involves an answering *in* our prayers in the form of the word. Do we still have an organ, an antenna, to hear God's speaking? Are we listening? Are we able to listen?

Put more starkly, are we still able to pray? Let's be honest, personal prayer is very difficult for most of us nowadays. When we ask why, we can point to a number of circumstances.

Overwhelmed by images

Nowadays the flame of experiential piety is at a very low setting. We are suffering from hardening of the arteries. Piety is one of the most important existential measures of our humanity. What has happened to modern humanity's awareness of the inexhaustible source of his being? Do things still reach the depth of his being and does he still plumb the depth of things?

The life of prayer requires a certain stillness and rest, but today the noisy profusion of the world sweeps over us through the media like a tidal wave so that our very souls are inundated. Our inwardness is overpopulated by the images of the world. We have too little "nakedness" and "imagelessness" (J. Van Ruusbroec) to allow for prayer. And this doesn't even take into account the accelerating rhythm of the economy which drives us to ceaseless, exhausting activity.

To this we must add that our consciousness, shaped as it still is by the worldview of science (although whether science still considers itself able to give us a worldview is debatable), exercises a profound resistance to prayer. It instills the idea that praying involves a belief in the mythical or the magical. Dorothee Solle once said that our morning prayers have been displaced by the morning paper.

Prayer – the nucleus of faith

Praying is indeed a very strange activity – talking into space and to no one who is everything, as J.H. van den Berg puts it. The praying person is wholly engaged in the

vertical; he is the other in an amazing relationship. Praying is the nucleus of faith, and the issue of prayer is the test case of faith. Anyone who denies the power of prayer and still claims to have faith speaks nonsense, at least from the Hebraic-Christian perspective.

But perhaps the reason for our lack of commitment to prayer is to be found elsewhere: in a radical hardness or closedness of heart. Perhaps, too, we are so closed toward one another as persons because of this closedness over toward God. It may also be why so many experience the self and being as ineffable; everything becomes inexpressible, stillness, a yawning chasm. Here we have left Christianity and slipped into the subtleties and wonders of gnosticism or paganism.

This raises the question, is our problem with prayer really due to



The Cathedral of St. Peter in Geneva, Switzerland.

modernity? Hasn't it always been so? Haven't people of all ages struggled with their incapacity to pray? Even in the monasteries. The human heart has throughout the ages been a garden in winter: nothing but hard soil and stones on which nothing grows.

The strangeness of prayer

It is especially in view of our problematic relation to prayer that we must stress the immeasurable and indispensable benefit of a liturgical stylization of life and thus also of our prayer life. In church we still do this nutty thing – pray, and no one there thinks it nutty. We can't imagine a worship service without prayer.

Yet, it is in the worship service that prayer becomes most strange, for there it is no longer just feeling, meditation, inwardness and wordlessness; there it becomes wholly

articulate. There in the most radical kind of outwardness, whether through the worship leader or in unison, we speak words to the Eternal. And we do so publicly. It is good to make ourselves aware of how nutty this looks, and to nevertheless keep doing it in all naïveté.

Although personal prayer wanes, although family prayer gets short shrift, and although it is disappearing in the meetings of organizations, the worship service continues to press this plea into the style of our souls.

That's one reason we go to church. We don't go just to sing a psalm and to dramatize the world's reality in the liturgy; we also go in order to refer everything to God and to reflect on it with him. This is what happens in the congregational prayer. It is a unique part of the worship service. Unlike the prayer of illumination, which focuses on the opening of the Word and the worship service itself, it brings forward the whole world.

Our neighbor in our prayers

There the other, our neighbor enters into our conversation; in fact, there we talk about everything – from those in authority over us to those who are dying. The first have a superhuman, godly task in which they need to be kept from stumbling and the latter need an arm to rest on as they take that last difficult step across life's boundary. Everything else exists between these two poles: the church, missions, our social task, the economy, children, the sciences, the arts and everything else that belongs to our world.

And this includes us. We also carry ourselves, our own cares and interests and needs to God in prayer. For just as we must not only love our neighbors but also ourselves (which is even harder if we do it right), so we must carry not just our neighbor and the world but also ourselves to God in prayer.

In our petitions for our neighbor, something amazing happens. He is there – not in himself, not in the world, for example in the government records, not even in the counsel of God or – by way of representation – in Christ the Mediator; he is in our petitionary prayers. That is one way, one place he exists, along with everything else we pray for.

In our prayers we take our neighbor and the world in our hands, and then we toss them and all reality back and forth. We toss the ball over to God, and he tosses it back to us. In our communal prayer, our liturgy becomes more than a sociodrama, which we act

out among ourselves. But in our congregational prayer God enters into the play, and things are passed back and forth between him and us.

This is even stranger than talking aloud to God in public – for the world to exist in our petitionary prayers and then to toss it back and forth between ourselves and God. If we ask what is more important the personal prayers of the individual or the liturgical prayers of the church, we see how deep and wide the mystery of the church is. It is the body of Christ, and Christ is the mediator between God and mankind.

It is he, isn't it, who steps in (intercedes) and actually performs this prayer for the world. Isn't this an essential part of his role as mediator? The church can do it only because it is his body and its prayers are taken up into the prayers of Christ. In fact, aren't our prayers as individuals also taken up into the prayers of the church? Are we even in and of ourselves able to pray? Mustn't we first be engrafted into the body of Christ and become members of his church?

Praying – the highest form of thinking

If we answer yes to these questions, this sheds an entirely new light on our incapacity to pray. It is not because of the weakness of our piety hat we need to go to church, but we need to go to church to pray properly. It is part of normal life, part of the very nature of things.

Petitionary prayer isn't all there is to prayer, of course; there is

thanksgiving, praise, confession of sin, lamentation and pleading for grace and mercy. All of these and more make up our prayer life. But at bottom to pray is to pray for the complete redemption of humanity. Man is not just homo ludens or homo laborans (playing or working man); he is much more homo orans (praying man).

Let me propose a series. There is perception: the experience of reality through the senses. There is action, doing and making and fashioning reality. Then comes cognition: thinking and reflecting on reality. This naturally leads to meditation, judging and weighing reality. From meditation the rational spirit of man rises to speculation and contemplation, seeing reality as it is projected against the screen of eternity. And contemplation can transform itself into petition, into prayer for reality. Praying is the highest form of thinking.

We might even ask if praying isn't the highpoint of human existence. Isn't it even more than praise? As we saw in a previous essay, praise is a central matter in which we make judgments about everything, even God, for it is him whom we praise above all. But doesn't prayer go even further? Isn't praying to mess in the counsel of God and to rule the world with him?

Why go to church? To carry the world to God in our petitions. And this might even be the most fundamental, the most decisive answer.

Shalom Manor announces

GRIMSBY, Ont. — Shalom Manor, in Grimsby, Ont., announced on Oct. 18, 2002 that the Ontario government has approved Shalom's \$17 million redevelopment and expansion project and will also provide government support. Brad Clark, MPP for Stoney Creek and Minister of Labour for Ontario, was present for the unveiling of building plans and will announce the funding for 67 "D" beds and 12 "New" beds for the home.

As an ethnic designated home, Shalom has provided care for seniors of Dutch heritage since 1979. The renovation and expansion means that it will be able to accommodate 144 beds at four different classifications and will add new administrative and activity areas, larger public spaces and an enlarged auditorium. There will also be 36 one-bedroom assisted living apartments.

Shalom Manor has expanded its vision to incorporate a "continuum of care" model in which seniors live in an integrated community where they are encouraged to be independent, but full care will also be available.

The long-term care facilities will be arranged in areas of 28 residents, each area equipped with its own dining room and lounge. Each apartment will have its own living-dining room, kitchenette and bathroom to promote independent living.

A passageway will link Shalom Manor to Shalom Evergreen Terrace, a 98 life-lease complex scheduled to open this month.

Construction of the expansion will begin in the Spring of 2003 and occupancy for the long-term care units is scheduled for Fall of 2004.

Bible Study

Women and the Church

Lambert Tuininga

It has been many years since the discussions on opening all offices in the church to women were started. It has also been some time now since the Christian Reformed Church has opened all offices to women if the local churches are ready. And in some classes women can be seated as delegates.

However, at the close of the 2002 we still see many churches, my own included, which are not including women, and which don't even allow discussion on the role of women in the church. There are also churches in the CRC which have opened all offices to women. At the synodical level, though women serve as advisers, no women have been allowed to be seated as official delegates.

How long can we continue?

My question is this: How long can we continue in this way? Can we continue to maintain that the Bible allows for both positions? Even though I would like to thank the CRC for taking a moderate and conciliatory approach to this issue, and even though there are probably still those who hold strong opinions on both sides, it seems to me that the time has come to reach a consensus.

I believe that this is necessary for the unity of the church and for the glory of the King of the church, our lord Jesus Christ. It is necessary to clarify the position of the church for the sake of all our sisters and daughters. Though I feel inadequate, I would like to present my personal position on this matter. I truly believe that we must allow women to serve in all church offices.

I believe that the reason we have different views on the role of women in the church is because we read the Bible differently. The Bible is God's word and is written by people inspired by the Holy Spirit. It is totally reliable and trustworthy and a lamp to my feet and a light on my path in my walk with God.

From the reformed view of scripture we learn that we must never isolate a given passage of the Bible from its immediate context — the verses immediately preceding or following — nor from the broader context — the chapter and the book. We must also rely on Christian historians and theologians to help us, since we are, roughly speaking, two thousand years removed from the last writing of the scriptures. Even Peter, a contemporary of Paul, stated that Paul wrote some things that were

hard to understand (2 Peter 3:16). We must be very careful when we think that we clearly understand the scriptures.

What the Lord intends for all time

From a reformed perspective then, let us look at the scriptures, and specifically the Old Testament to find out how it views the position and status of women within the community of God's people. Let's start with Genesis 1:26 - 28.

"Then God said, we will make human beings; they will be like us and resemble us. They will have power over the fish, the birds and all animals both domestic and wild, large and small. So God created human beings, making them like himself. He created them male and female, blessed them and said, have many children so that your descendants will live all over the earth, and bring it under control. I am putting you in charge of the fish, the birds and the wild animals."

What is important here is that God gave this mandate to both male and female. He gave it equally to both of them. Together they were made in the image of God, and together they were given the mandate to rule and develop the earth for the Lord. This is what the Lord wanted and intended for us for all time. He wanted that for the Old Testament people, and he wants that for us today.

When we sinned, however, all our relationships changed, those between us and our Creator, between ourselves as human beings, and between ourselves and the creation. We were the cause of the change. God's plan and purpose remained the same. We distorted creation through our sin.

Then God punished us for our disobedience. In Genesis 3 we read that the ground would be cursed for man's sin; thorns and thistles would grow and the man would have to sweat and toil to produce food and then he would die. The woman would have great pain in bearing children, and "your husband will rule over you." Here for the first time because of sin we see a change in the relationships between human beings and between God and the creation.

We see these broken relationships throughout the Old Testament. The Lord did not intend it to be this way. So he immediately and by his wonderful grace provided a way out. In Genesis 3:15 God spoke to the snake: "I will make you and the woman hate each other, her offspring and yours will always be enemies. Her offspring

will crush your head and you will bite their heel."

God's grace breaks through

Because of our sins we see all kinds of rules and restrictions come into play. In Leviticus, often referred to as the book of the time of shadows, we see only the Jews are God's chosen people, and women are under the rule of men and often had no rights at all apart from men.

In spite of that, we see God's grace break through time and again. All the sacrifices and holy days and feasts point to a better day when Genesis 3:15 would be fulfilled. Even though the Jews were God's chosen people, we see God's

Old Testament!

This is amazing. We do not hear one word of rebuke from the Lord or from the men over whom she ruled. Instead, when she tells Barak to gather an army to fight Sisera, the commander of the enemy army, we hear Barak say: "If you go with me I will go, but if you don't go with me then I will not go." Barak recognized that God was with Deborah and that she proclaimed the word of the Lord. At the end of Chapter 5 we read: "The land had rest for forty years." There isn't a word of rebuke. To the contrary, there's a blessing from the Lord.

In a time when property was passed on from father to son (Numbers 27), Zelophehad, a father, is

day, we see God's grace break through.

In 2 Kings 22, Huldah is a prophetess who proclaims the word of the Lord to Hilkiah the priest, and to the ambassadors from King Josiah. We read: "This is what the Lord the God of Israel says" and then she goes on to proclaim the word of the Lord with a powerful sermon. Other women we can mention are Miriam, the sister of Moses, Tamar in Genesis 38, Jael in Judges 4, Esther, and the noble woman in Proverbs 31.

We find wonderful promises in Joel 2:28 and 29: "And afterwards says the Lord, I will pour out my spirit on all peoples, your sons and your daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams and your young men will see visions; even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my spirit in those days." This promise was to be fulfilled in Jesus Christ in Acts 2:39. However, we see a foretaste of this promise many times in the Old Testament. Even in the time of the shadows, God did not want relationships to be broken. He wanted them to be the way he created them in the beginning.

Jesus broke the barrier

Let's now look at the New Testament. There we see the fulfillment of the Old Testament promises coming true in the birth of Jesus Christ. Here, at last, we have a restored relationship with God. Jesus broke the barrier between Jews and all the other nations of the earth (Luke 24:27, Matthew 28:16-20, Acts 9:15). Jesus came to restore the relationship between man and woman, slave and free. In Galatians 3:28 we read: "There is no Jew or Greek, slave or free, male or female, for you all are one in Jesus Christ."

Often we see Jesus associating with women and recognizing them as very important in his ministry and in his life of suffering. In Luke 7:36-50 a woman anoints Jesus' feet with oil and Jesus praises her for it. In Luke 10:38-40 Jesus takes time to sit down with Mary, and he commends her for taking time to talk with him rather than working in the kitchen. In John 4:7-42 Jesus sits at a well with a Samaritan woman and teaches the good news to her. The woman leaves and preaches the gospel to the people in her town. Many come to believe in Jesus through her. In John 20:10-18 we read that women were the first to witness the resurrection of Jesus and to bring the news back to his disciples. Jesus appears to



Deborah tells Barak to gather an army to fight Sisera

grace coming through in outsiders such as Rahab the harlot and Ruth the Moabitess, both women!

Deborah is a wonderful example: as a prophetess, she held court and the Israelites came to her to have their disputes settled. She proclaimed the work of the Lord — and it all occurred in the time of the

dying. Having only daughters, there is a question as to who should have his property. The daughters go to Moses with this problem. Moses inquires of the Lord and God replies: "If a man dies and has no sons, his inheritance will be turned over to his daughter." Here again, against the custom of the

Bible Study

Mary Magdalene after his resurrection and instructs her to tell his disciples. "I am returning to my father and your father, to my God and your God."

These things might not mean a lot to us, but in Jesus' day women were not rated very highly. Their words were not considered reliable. A man was not supposed to address a woman in public. Certainly not a Samaritan woman. By doing these things, Jesus was saying loudly and clearly that he did not agree with the rules and taboos placed on women. In Galatians 3:28, Paul says that when it comes to salvation there is no difference between men and women - all are equal. He mentions three relationships because all are broken by sin. They are now restored to their original intent through the work of Jesus Christ.

What role did women play in the early New Testament church? It was a very important role. Many women were prophets, disciples, leaders and teachers. Anna was a prophetess (Luke 2:36-38). Euodia and Syntyche worked along with Paul (Philippians 4:2 and 3). Phoebe served as a deacon (Romans 16:1). Priscilla and her husband Aquila were leaders and teachers (Acts 18:24-26). In Romans 16 we read of several more women. They are Mary, Junia, Tryphena and Tryphosa. The daughters of Philip, the evangelist, were prophets (Acts 21:8 and 9). In Joppa lived a woman disciple named Tabitha (Acts 9:36-42).

Did Paul contradict himself?

We must now look at some of Paul's writing in 1 Corinthians 11 and 14, and in 1 Timothy 2, controversial passages with regard to women and their role in the Christian church. Was Paul a male chauvinist as some people seem to

think? Absolutely not!

Paul was God's chosen instrument to carry God's name to the Gentiles (Acts 9:15-22; Acts 13:2). He was filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 13:9 and 25). Paul used many women to help him in the preaching and spreading of the gospel (Romans 16; Phillipians 4:2 and 3). Paul affirmed women again and again and worked side by side with them. He even called them apostles (Romans 16:7).

However, in Timothy 32 and in 1 Corinthians 11 Paul said that women should be silent and should not teach. Here Paul contradicted himself. Could it be that he was afraid of the Jews as Peter seemed to be in Galatians 2:11-21? Not really. Paul opposed Peter to his face for his cowardice.

I believe that Paul's goal and purpose as an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ was above all to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ crucified. That was the sole purpose of his hard work. He was concerned about anything that would possibly hamper the spreading of the gospel and the coming of God's Kingdom.

Remember, this was a time of the great transition from the Old Testament to the New Testament, and also from law to grace, and circumcision to baptism. Just recall how difficult it was for the Jews to allow the Gentiles to become part of the family of God (Acts 10; Galatians 3). It was difficult for the Jews to understand that many of the Old Testament laws were now fulfilled in Jesus Christ (Galatians 2 and 3). Paul mentions slavery. If he had condemned slavery it would have also hampered the spread of the gospel.

Something, it seems, was going on in the churches of Corinth and Ephesus which hampered or hurt the spread of the gospel. Consider Paul's response to eating meat of-

fered to idols in 1 Corinthians 10:23, 31-33, and Paul's response to speaking in tongues in 1 Corinthians 14:1-39. Paul was concerned about propriety in worship and believed that everything must be done decently and in good order.

Could it be that some of the women who had just experienced their new-found freedom in Christ caused a disturbance by asking questions during the worship service? In the culture of that time women were not supposed to be educated. They were expected to be passive observers, also during the worship service. Men occupied the main floor of the synagogue and women and children were seated on the balcony further away. Sometimes even a screen separated them. I can imagine that perhaps at times things threatened to get out of hand when women started asking questions. It would make sense then for Paul to suggest that women should be quiet and talk things over with their husbands later.

After all, Paul's main concern was to preach the gospel. If unbelievers were present it would have been more important to preach to them rather than to listen to men and women having debates while sitting far away from each other. So Paul's words could be interpreted to mean that he was instructing women to be quiet in the synagogue to keep order.

Paul's instructions that women were not allowed to teach also made sense at that time. Most women were not educated and had very little knowledge of the scriptures. How could they teach in that situation? In our day we expect preachers to go to seminary for several years to prepare for the ministry. To teach, one has to be knowledgeable.

Disruptive women

There were also false teachers attacking the church at Ephesus (1 Timothy 3, 6, 7). There appeared to be some women among the false teachers who misused their new found freedom and who forced false teaching on new Christians. These women seemed to be disrupting the worship services. For that reason Paul told them to be quiet, to stop their teaching. If we take Paul's instruction in Timothy 2 to be binding for all time, and at face value, then we must do the same for another verse where Paul says that women will be

saved through childbearing (1 Timothy 2:15). No one takes that verse at face value because it denies that Jesus is the only way to salvation.

In Corinthians 11:5 Paul says that women are allowed to pray and prophesy provided they do so with their heads covered. In Chapter 14 Paul forbids women to speak; they must remain silent. In Chapter 11:11 Paul says: "In the Lord, however, woman is not independent of man, nor is man independent of women. For as a woman came from man, so also is man born of woman." Yet we say that the covering of the head was meant for that time only, but women must be silent in the church for all time. This argument does not stand up.

In what way are we hindering the spread of the gospel by not allowing women to serve in all the offices of the church today? Are we putting stumbling blocks in front of people who might otherwise come to the Lord? Are we opening ourselves up for ridicule by not allowing women their rightful place in our churches? Just as we find it hard to understand that at one time the church supported slavery on the basis of the Bible, our children and grandchildren will have a hard time believing that we did not allow women in leadership positions in the church on the basis of the Bible. I truly hope our children will not judge us harshly when they learn that our churches even split up over this issue.

My prayer is that very soon the CRC will open all offices to anyone who is qualified to serve, irrespective of gender. I believe that the Lord will truly bless us and cause the Word to go out with much power and blessing. Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 11 and 14 and in 1 Timothy 2 addressed problems which existed in the church at that time. They cannot be applied for all time as Joel 1:28-32 demonstrates, for it was fulfilled at Pentecost.

We are amazingly slow at believing what the prophets testified about. We are limiting the work that Jesus accomplished on Easter morning by not allowing women into all the offices of the church.

In closing I realize that my writing presents only a very small part of a very difficult issue. Many questions remain. My prayer is that we will always respect each other no matter what position we have regarding the role of women in the church. May we be willing to learn as much as we can about what the Bible teaches and may we always be open to the leading of the Holy Spirit in our search for truth.

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- Mary Stuart Van Leeuwen, *Gender and Grace*
- Faith Martin, *Call Me Blessed*
- Ruth A. Tucker, *Women in the Maze*
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- Philip Yancey, *The Bible Jesus Read*
- Henk Hart, *Setting Our Sights by the Morning Star*
- Weima, *How to Read the Bible For All Its Worth* Three part video

Lambert Tuininga lives in Neerlandia, Alberta. He is a farmer and attends the Christian Reformed Church.

Building Trust Vicky Van Anel is the editor of this column. Anyone who would like to contribute to this column is invited to contact her via fax at 1-780-473-0970, or by e-mail at: vanandel@oanet.com



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News Comment

Notes for Home



Bert Hielema

FIFTY YEARS AGO THIS month I became self-employed, selling life insurance. Those were the simple times. Because I had a natural market, recent Dutch immigrants, of which I was one, I did well. A few years later I branched out into general insurance and recall that I could insure a new car, full coverage with 25 deductible all perils — collision and comprehensive combined — for about \$80. My all risk Home Owner's policy cost no more than \$60, and, generally, companies grew rich on these small amounts.

Now, between two cars and my property I pay well over \$2,000 per year. Still, in spite of much higher rates, these multi-billion dollar outfits are in a real pickle. Not only do they not make any money: they are losing it by the bucketful. The reason: Global warming.

When I was in the Hague two years ago, attending the Climate Change Conference, the insurance industry was well represented, because they saw the smoking gun in the form of claims due to weather-related disasters.

I HEARD GEORGE W. Bush a few days ago talking about evil Iraq. He admitted that there was no smoking gun that pointed directly to Saddam; yet, he continually chooses to ignore the omni-present signs which may cause the ruination of an important part of our financial system as well as our ecosystem.

Here are the facts. During the

last three decades, the number of un-natural mishaps has increased five-fold. That translates into five times as many major hurricanes and tornadoes annually touching down in places like Miami and Houston. Worldwide we now have to cope with a 500 per cent increase in floods, mudslides, hailstorms, droughts, icing dangers and wildfires. In practical terms this means more wrecked cars, more collapsing houses, more ruined crops and businesses, in short more devastated lives.

According to Bush's very own Department of Energy, losses from all causes have increased 15-fold since 1960, even when corrected for inflation. The chairman of the United Nations Environment Program's Insurance Industry Initiative, says: "The threats to our economies and lifestyles from Climate Change are no less consequential than terrorism." In the last 40 years the number of large calamities has increased from 16 to 72 and total property damage has jumped from \$7 billion to more than \$90 billion. The institutions created to reimburse us when disaster knocks are worried sick.

The German-based Muenich Re, one of the largest re-insurance companies in the world employs 35 climate scientists, hired specifically to make educated guesses about the weather. Here are some of their observations: "Because the world is warming, water evaporates more quickly, causing more extreme rainfall but also more

intense droughts. Heavy downpours happen more often near mountains, where humidity is forced up into colder air, creating torrential rain and causing more landslides and flooding."

HURRICANES CAN ONLY survive over water at temperatures above 27 degrees Celsius or 80 Fahrenheit. Warmer oceans breed more hurricanes, which travel further inland.

Last month I read two disturbing reports. From Zurich, Switzerland, a Global Insurance Centre, a group of the world's biggest banks, insurers and re-insurers warned that financial losses from this summer's floods in Central Europe were estimated at \$150 billion. *The Economist* noted that the fall in equity markets has made an already sorry situation worse. It used to be that losses in underwriting were more than compensated by gains on the financial market. No longer. No wonder the industry as a whole has, since the start of the year, lost 60 per cent of its share value.

Writes *The Economist*: "A number of European insurers are so short of capital that they cannot underwrite new business. A few are almost broke, unable to meet immediate liabilities without a cash injection."

FORTUNATELY, WE here in Canada are better off than our U.S.A. friends, where 68 million live along hurricane-prone coastlines. Add to that the people living along the flood-happy Mississippi and in the tornado-ridden Midwest, and almost half the American population is in danger of having their house insurance either canceled outright or to see their premiums double or triple. Still, we will not escape the consequences. Even in safe Ontario people will see the price to safeguard our belongings rise substantially, as premiums rise everywhere.

We all are to blame for this, as we, generally, refuse to take measures to cut down on energy use. The coming war on Iraq will make matters worse, as real smoking guns will be used, which will accelerate and aggravate the gravest crisis ever to face humanity. War destroys much more than lives and property; it kills everything: air, soil, trees, water. You name it, and it suffers.

And I hold one man especially responsible for this. Henry Kissinger called him the most ruthless man he ever had to deal with. The U.S. generals call him names the editor will not allow me to print. The reason that they so bit-

terly complain about him is, according to the *Washington Post*, the paper closest to the world's political heart beat, that their best advice is being ignored by someone who has spent most of the last 25 years away from the military. The crisp, no-nonsense impression he gives when appearing on television, where he has become a media star through his briefings on the Afghan war, is totally at odds with the way he is seen inside the Pentagon. There, the high-ups in all the branches of the world's mightiest war machine, describe Donald Rumsfeld, the U.S. Defense Secretary, as often abusive and indecisive, trusting only a tiny circle of close advisers, seemingly eager to slap down men with chests full of decorations and decades of distinguished service.

WHAT DRIVES THIS man? Simple. Rumsfeld and his colleagues are members of that most dangerous of breeds: utopians. They think they can straighten out our fractious and messy world, and they know they are right. Rumsfeld has found in George W. Bush a naive, but eager convert to the undisputed truth of American goodness and American power. It's only a matter of time until the U.S.A. will go to war on Iraq, seeing it as the start of a unique opportunity to force the Bush Doctrine on the world, of which Rumsfeld was a co-author. The Bush vision is one of world domination, based on the assumption that: "We are the good guys. We use our great power only to promote worthy causes; we advance democracy (though less-than-half vote, and money is the key to winning); we keep destructive weapons out of the hands of terrorists; we promote peace through global free trade."

There is no doubt that the U.S.A. is powerful. The 19th century belonged to Great Britain, whose supremacy was its Navy, bigger than the next two largest war fleets combined. The budget for the U.S. armed forces is greater, in dollars spent, than the total of military expenditures of the next largest 15 countries. When he gave the commencement address at West Point (the U.S. Officer training School), Bush stated: "America has, and intends to keep military strengths beyond challenge... and use this power to create a universal dominion of right." According to the Bush gospel, American power is exempt from fallen human nature because they are God's very own people. It believes that only the U.S.A. has moral clarity. The Soviet Union was an evil empire.

Osama is evil. The axis of evil is evil. The other side is absolutely evil, so the United States of America must be absolutely good and thus it's fine for them to be absolutely powerful.

AMERICA IS SO GOOD that it can create a universal dominion of Right. A statement like that scares the wits out of me. This is the country that wants to destroy the new International Criminal Court created to prosecute suspects of genocide and crimes against humanity. This is the country that scoffs at the Geneva Convention governing the treatment of prisoners of war, rules that have bound the civilized world for decades. This is the country that refuses to limit earth-destroying greenhouse gases of which Kyoto is a feeble start.

This is the country that held a 32-year-old Canadian engineer of Syrian descent and then deported him to Syria without further ado. Now nobody knows where he is. This is the country whose president claims the right to hold any American citizen whom he designates as an "enemy combatant" in military prison indefinitely, without trial and without the right to speak with a lawyer. This is the country whose president, when governor of Texas, showed a cruel casualness in his handling of death penalty cases.

Power corrupts. Corruption destroys from within, all too evident today. Is this a prelude to the fall of the American Empire?

Yale University political scientist, Immanuel Wallerstein, and former McGill Professor, thinks so. He states in his coming book, *The Decline of American Power*, as reported in the *Globe and Mail*: "The United States has been fading as a global power since the 1970s and the U.S. response to the terrorist attack has merely accelerated this decline." Dr. Wallerstein describes his country as a "lone superpower that lacks true power, a world leader nobody follows and few respect, and a nation drifting dangerously amidst a global chaos it cannot control." He is quoted in the *Globe*: "Of the three major wars the U.S. fought since World War II, one — Vietnam — was a defeat, and Korea and the Gulf War were draws. Iraq would be an end game." Prophetic words?

I gleaned some of the above information from the October 14-21 issue of the *New Yorker* and the November 7 web issue of the *New York Review of Books*.

Bert Hielema lives in Tweed, Ont.

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Graduation



We are pleased to announce that our daughter,

Nancy de Kleer

has completed her training in Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery. Nancy attended John Knox Christian School (Brampton) and Toronto District Christian High School prior to obtaining her Registered Nursing diploma at Humber College. She obtained her Bachelors of Science degree from the University of Western Ontario before completing her Medical degree and postgraduate training at the University of Toronto. We join her husband George and son Elliot in congratulating her. Congratulations Nancy and may the Lord lead and guide you in your profession.

Ed & Evelyn Eggengoor



Anniversaries

1952 - November 13 - 2002

"So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let men not separate."
Matthew 19:6

With joy and thankfulness to God for His many blessings, we hope to celebrate, the Lord willing, the 50th wedding anniversary of our parents

TIM and ANNA HESSELS
(nee Doggen)

We pray that the Lord will continue to bless you both and grant you much health and happiness together for each other and for us, your children and grandchildren.

Congratulations and love,

Henry & Connie Hessels - Welland

Melissa, Craig, Lucy, Angelo

John Hessels - Wellandport,

Alan & Liz Hessels - Wainfleet

Chris, Kim, Calvin, Kandace

Ted & Yvonne Hessels - Wellandport

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Rick & Teresa Hessels - Wellandport

Eli, Ian, Kayla, Erica

Dave & Edna Hessels - Wellandport

Vicky, Danielle

Ken & Pam Hessels - Wellandport

Brendan, Olivia

(All in Ontario)

An Open House will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday November 16, 2002 from 2-4 p.m. at the Wellandport Orthodox Reformed Church in Wellandport, Ontario.

Best wishes only please.

Home address: 74080 Wellandport Rd
Wellandport ON L0R 2J0



St. Catharines, Ont. Ancaster, Ont.
1957 November 16 2002

In thankfulness for God's steadfast love, we are happy to announce the 45th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents,

JAKE and TERESA RUMPH
(nee Van Minnen)

We thank them for their love and support. We pray that God will bless them and us with many more years together.

Deborah & Harold Knor - Hamilton

Brian, Karen, Amy and Wendy

David & Nancy Rumph - Ancaster

Jessica and Jeremy

Edward Rumph & Sharron Ingram

Cookstown

Cynthia & John Veldhoen - Belleville

An Open House to celebrate this joyous occasion will be held on Saturday November 16, 2002 from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at their residence, 42 Milne Court, Ancaster, Ontario, L9G 4T3

1952 November 15 2002
We joyfully announce the 50th wedding anniversary of

HANS and ANNE SNOEK
(nee Kruijs)

We are thankful for the Lord's blessing and guidance in their lives, and pray that the Lord will bless them with many more years together. (Psalm 121)

Art & Nettie Snook

Glen & Nicole; Rod, Jackie & Mark,

Ben & Julia; Katie

Wilma & George DeGroot

David, Matthew, Phillip, Benjamin

Joyce & George Hoekstra

Timothy, Angela, Ryan, Jeremy,

Joel, Emily

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Shelly & Clarence (Brendan);

Kevin & Christina (Leah)

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Amanda, Andrew, Rachel, Crystal,

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Psalm 128

With thankfulness and praise to God we pray the Lord willing to celebrate 60 years of marriage of our beloved parents

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Psalm 127

With thankfulness to our Lord for his constant faithfulness and grace, we celebrate the 60th wedding anniversary of our parents.

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JOHN and RUBY DENING

On Nov. 21/52 in the Third CRC in Edmonton, John & Ruby were united in marriage by Rev. J. K. van Baalen. To celebrate this wonderful occasion, their children and grandchildren would like to honor them with your presence at an Open House D.V. Saturday afternoon Nov. 23 from 2 to 4 at the A.C.T. Centre in Rundle Park, 2909 - 113 Ave. Edmonton. "Best wishes only please" Home address: 12222 - 38 St
Edmonton AB T5W 2J3



Obituaries

ELSEY H. M. (HAVINGA) SNEEP

in her 86th year, after a life of faith and service, went home to be with her Lord, on Thursday, October 17, 2002.

Beloved wife of the late Cornelius M. Sneepe (1968).

Cherished mother of Mary Joan and husband Jack Wyatt of London, John and wife Eileen Sneepe of Edmonton, Tony and wife Jana of Edmonton, Jim and wife Vicky of Whitby. Proud and loving grandmother of Sandee and John Wiltshire, Lisa Wiersma, Dan Sneepe, Carla and Mark Snaterse, Jeff and Roslyn Sneepe, Randy Sneepe and fiancée Jill Schuld, Doug, Greg, Todd and Honey-Lynn Sneepe, Heather Mann and Joshua Sneepe, and great-grandmother of Benjamin, Kristen and Carly Wiltshire and Matthew Justin and Jacob Snaterse.

Elsey is also survived by one sister Jantina Turkstra, four brothers Jack, Fred, Ralph and Mike Havinga and a sister-in-law Loes Hoff. She maintained loving relationships with numerous nieces and nephews and was a special friend of Alison French. She was predeceased by sisters Elsa, Joan and Corrie and brother John.

Mrs. Sneepe retired from the South-western Regional Centre in 1982 and joyfully served as Librarian for the Chatham Christian Secondary School from that date until June 2002.

The funeral service was held at Grace Christian Reformed Church, Chatham on Monday, October 21, 2002. Interment in Maple Leaf Cemetery, Chatham.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations to the Chatham Christian Schools or Christian Horizons would be greatly appreciated.

Correspondence address
M. J. Wyatt, 1534 Hastings Dr.
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Obituaries

April 14, 1967
Bowmanville, Ont.

Sept 27, 2002
Milford, Ont.

"Be still and know that I am God."

In His time, God has taken home our dear loved one

SHARON MELODY MILLER
(MULDER)

Beloved wife of Trevor. Loved mother of Hilary, Miranda, and Mackenzie. Beloved daughter of John and Brenda Mulder. Dear sister of Bert and Nancy Mulder of Wellington, Raymond and Kim Mulder and Jennifer and Richard Snider, both of Bloomfield. Daughter-in-law of Wilbur and Alice Miller of Milford. Sister-in-law to Glen and Sam, Owen and Colleen, Leigh and Linda and Allison. She will be sadly missed by her nieces and nephews.

The funeral service was held at the Bethany Christian Reformed Church on Tuesday, October 1st at 10:30 a.m. Pastor Kasey Vanderveen officiated.

Correspondence Address
John & Brenda Mulder
RR 1, Bloomfield ON K0K 1G0



September 7, 1909 October 4, 2002
2de Exloermond, Brampton
Drente Ontario

JANET FOKKENS (MAJOOR)

On October 4, 2002 the Lord granted Janet Fokkens the wish of her heart and took her home to Himself. She was dearly loved and will be greatly missed by her children and their families. She was predeceased by her husband, John Fokkens (1969) and by her son, Bob (1991).

Mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and great-great grandmother of

Jack & Jane Fokkens - Georgetown ON
Henriette & Paul Thompson
Georgetown ON

Eric, Adrienne, Laura
Janet & John Geertsema - Barrie ON
Aaron and Carrissa, Janelle,

Katelyn, Kelly
John & Karen Fokkens - Telkwa BC

Micaela, Brent, Bryan, Luke
Karen & Andrew De Beer - Barrie ON
Mark, Leah, Sarah

Ingrid & David Flikkema
Brampton, ON
Devon, Aidan, Maya

Elly Fokkens (Broekema)
Sleen, Holland
Gail & Klaas Vedelaar - Holland

Marjan and Chris, Rogier
Nicole, Kelly
John & Mina Fokkens - Holland

Kim
Janet & Roelof Dijk - Holland
Miriam, Sylvia, Mark, Alicia

Jane & Roelof Eefting - Holland
Dennis, Rick
Rob & Iris Fokkens - Germany

Kevin
The funeral service took place on

October 9, 2002 at the Georgetown Christian Reformed Church with the Rev. Herman Praamsma officiating.

Correspondence address:
Jack and Jane Fokkens
19 McIntyre Crescent
Georgetown ON L7G 1N5

Classifieds

Obituary



JANE BOSCH

October 7, 1914 October 8, 2002
I have called you by name,
You are mine...
Isaiah 43:1

Dear wife of Tim Bosch (1980)

Dear Mother and Oma of:
Pat (1995) and Joe Boersma - *Paris*
Jake and Alice Bosch - *Waterloo*
Hank and Alice Bosch - *Cambridge*
Margaret and Kees VanDaalen -
London
15 grandchildren and
11 great-grandchildren
Correspondence Address:
Mrs. M. VanDaalen
753 Verulam St.
London, Ont. N6C 5B1

Church News



Classis Niagara

plans to meet in regular session on
Wednesday, January 15, 2003 at the
Bethany CRC in Fenwick. Items for the
agenda, including requests to address
Classis, should be in my hands by De-
cember 2, when the agenda will be
prepared.
John TeBrake, Stated Clerk

Classis Eastern Canada
Session of Oct. 18 & 19, 2002
►admitted to the office of Minister of
the Word in the CRC:

Cand. Benjamin J. Ponsen.
The 3 Syn. Deputies in attendance
concurred in this action of Classis.
May God richly bless this young pas-
tor as he ministers in the First CRC of
Kemptville, Ontario, where his ordina-
tion and installation will take place,
D.V. Nov. 22, 2002.

►having considered the need and
having examined him for licensure to
exhort in accordance with the provi-
sions of C.O. Art. 7, allowed

Mr. David Sutherland
to proceed with his desire and quest
to become an ordained chaplain in the
Canadian Armed Forces. The 3 Syn.
Deputies concurred with the decision
of Classis.

►Release from Ministry
granted honourable release from the
office of minister of the Word in the
CRC in N.A. to

Rev. Frank Guter
of First CRC of Montreal in accor-
dance with C.O. Art. 14-b.
The Syn. Deputies concurred with this
decision of Classis. We wish Frank
God's continued blessing in his new
work in England.

James Kooistra SC

With thanksgiving to God, the
Smithers Christian Reformed Church
celebrates its 50th Anniversary on
Nov. 23-24, 2002. All former members
are invited to attend. For further infor-
mation, please contact Aren Bakker at
250-847-2369 or Harry Kruisselbrink
at 250-847-3638.

Job Opportunities

CLARKSON CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

is a vibrant congregation in **Mississauga**, a suburban area
west of Toronto. In addition to our regular programs, we
have also launched both Alpha and Network in the last year.
So that we might better accommodate our various ministries,
we have recently voted to relocate to new and expanded
facilities. Currently we have **4 part-time staff positions**
open in the areas of:

- Youth Ministry,
- Outreach Ministry,
- Volunteer/Ministry Coordinator
- Worship Coordinator.



These encompass 4 of the 6 strategic priorities in our
church's Long Range Plan. While each position represents
up to 20-25 hours/week, with the right skill/gift match, we are
very receptive to combining two of these openings into a full-
time position.

If you have a deep love for the Lord, have gifts and a
passion for service in any of these areas, coupled with a
demonstrated ability to work in a team environment, we
would like to hear from you. An ability to preach occasionally
would also be an asset.

Please direct inquiries and résumés to:



Clarkson Christian Reformed Church
1880 Lakeshore Road West
Mississauga, Ontario L5J 1J8
ATTENTION: Ministry Staffing
E mail: mail@clarksoncrc.on.ca

For a closer look at our church, surf over to our
Web site at www.clarksoncrc.on.ca



Dordt College

Faculty Positions

Dordt College is seeking applications for openings beginning
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Criminal Justice

Develop and teach in an interdisciplinary criminal justice program.
Qualified applicants should have a background in criminal justice,
criminology, sociology, or related field.

Education (Two positions)

Teach introduction, upper-level (elementary and secondary
methods), special education.

Spanish

Teach elementary, intermediate, and upper level courses in Spanish
language, literature, and culture.

Social Work

Generalist; micro-practice background; methods courses and field
practice.

Theology

General education courses in biblical theology and upper level
biblical studies courses.

Evaluation of applications will continue until the positions are
filled. To learn more about a position and receive application
materials, qualified persons committed to a Reformed, biblical
perspective and educational philosophy are encouraged to send a
letter of interest and curriculum vita/resume to:

Dr. Rockne McCarthy Facsimile: 712 722-4496
Vice President for Academic Affairs E-mail:
Dordt College vpaa@dordt.edu
498 4th Ave. NE Web site:
Sioux Center, IA 51250-1697 www.dordt.edu/offices/acadaff

*Dordt College is an equal opportunity institution that strongly
encourages the applications of women, minorities, and disabled persons.*

PRAIRIE ASSOCIATION OF
CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

seeks a new

CURRICULUM COORDINATOR

Are you someone who can provide leadership in the reformed
educational philosophy expressed in the member schools of PACS?

Duties include:

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- Curriculum Consultation
- School Evaluations
- Board Development
- Mediation

Regular travel is required. The position will commence on a date
negotiable between May 1st and August 1st. Salary is in the range
of administrative pay within member schools.

Applications will be received until **January 13, 2003**
Please direct inquiries and applications to:

Julius de Jager, PACS Curriculum Coordinator
9125 - 50 Street,
Edmonton, Alberta T6B 2H3
Phone: 1-780-469-9653 Fax: 1-780-469-9880
E-Mail: pacs@kingsu.ab.ca

Positions in Education

CALVIN COLLEGE is seeking to fill two tenure track positions
and a 2-year term position in the Education Department
beginning Fall 2003.

Duties: Teach undergraduate and graduate courses in some
combination of the following areas: Educational Psychology; Social
Studies methods; Middle School; Special Education: Learning
Disabilities; Curriculum and Instruction; Foundations; supervise
field placements. Engage in scholarship.

Qualifications: Earned Doctorate (or ABD) or equivalent in
Education/ Special Education; demonstrated effective teaching and
a record of or potential for scholarly research; P-12 teaching
experience; commitment to a Reformed expression of Christian
faith.

Application: Interested applicants should forward a letter of
application detailing their interest and qualifications and a full vita
to:

Dr. Tom Hoeksema, Chair
Education Department
Calvin College
3201 Burton S.E.
Grand Rapids, MI 49546

Deadline: Screening of applicants will begin by January 6 and will
continue until all positions are filled. Inquiries regarding the
positions may be directed to the Chair of the Department, Dr. Tom
Hoeksema at (616) 957-6212 or hoet@calvin.edu.

*Calvin College is a Christian college within the Reformed tradition of Christianity
and is an equal opportunity employer. The college encourages the application of
women and minority candidates.*

ARE YOU PLANNING A CHRISTMAS SERVICE IN DUTCH ?

If so I may have help for you. I have a litany entitled "Jezus De Levende
Verlosser" which goes through the life of Christ in readings and song. The
music is not included but is available in song books by Johan de Heer, Van
Woensel-Kooy, from the Psalter and from the dutch Psalm book. Send a
(double) stamped, self addressed envelope to: Coby Veenstra Box 133,
Hampton, ON L0B 1J0 (No Charge)

Classifieds

Job Opportunities

Miscellaneous

Mountainview Christian Reformed Church

Grimsby, Ontario, Canada
905-945-0004



We seek to fill two Ministry Positions

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- Youth Ministry
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If you are interested in receiving
a church profile or more information
please e-mail suekikert@hotmail.com

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To God be the Glory!

ASSOCIATE PASTOR

Covenant Christian Reformed Church in **Winnipeg, Manitoba**, is looking for an Associate Pastor. The primary role, especially in the first year, is to strengthen the ministry to youth and establish the ministry to young adults. Some preaching will be expected, and once the ministry to youth and young adults is established, assisting the Senior Pastor in a variety of tasks, as agreed upon by Council.

For a complete job description or to apply, please contact:

Tina Brakkel
653 Knowles Ave.,
Winnipeg, Manitoba, R2G 2K3
Phone: 204-667-1116
or email: ccrc@mts.net

Miscellaneous

The University of Calgary Campus Ministry Committee
Invites applications for a full time

CAMPUS MINISTER

to establish and develop a brand new campus ministry at the
University of Calgary in
Calgary, Alberta.

The University of Calgary is a young, dynamic university aiming to be among the top five research institutions in Canada and is an integral part of Calgary's growth as a world-class city. Calgary is also a strategic site for exciting new missional activity within the CRC community, and the campus ministry at the University of Calgary is an important addition to God's mission in Calgary. This campus ministry will join several existing campus ministries, serving a diverse undergraduate and graduate student population along with a faculty and staff component. The campus ministry is envisioned to become a leader, influencing the life and spiritual development of the University through an integration of faith and learning.

We are looking for a Christian, strongly committed to the Reformed faith and one who is

- A highly motivated self starter who can develop this new ministry
- Has advanced academic and/or professional degrees
- Has experience working pastorally with youth and students
- Is engaged with contemporary cultural, academic and theological concerns
- Is able to relate well to religious and ethnically diverse groups on campus
- Able to work well with other campus chaplains, both Christians and those of other faiths

A job description is available upon request. Please send a letter of application, a complete resume, two reference letters as well as a brief outline of your personal vision for campus ministry to:

Dr. Warren Piers
S. Robert Blair Professor of Chemistry
University of Calgary
Dept. of Chemistry
2500 University Drive, NW
Calgary, AB T2N 1N4
Email: wpiers@ucalgary.ca

Application Deadline: December 15, 2002

I have known and admired ICS for many years.

John Stott, author and founder of
John Stott Ministries for Third World pastors



INSTITUTE FOR CHRISTIAN STUDIES

Christian Graduate Education
www.icscanada.edu

Job Opportunities



The Society of Christian Schools in
British Columbia (SCSBC)

is searching for a

DIRECTOR

to join their leadership team

The SCSBC, committed to dynamic, biblical worldview, serves its forty member schools by giving leadership and building community in a number of areas including curriculum, school and board leadership, government relations and financial stewardship. Persons with significant gifts and experience in a number of the above areas are encouraged to apply. The ideal candidate will be an effective team builder and have a graduate degree, significant experience in Christian education, demonstrated leadership abilities and strong interpersonal skills. A gift conscious Board will design a leadership team to promote the story of greater biblical faithfulness in exciting and challenging times.

All applications should be received by December 15, 2002. Please direct your inquiries to:

Search Committee

Janet Hitchcock, Chair

7600 Glover Road, Langley, BC V2Y 1Y1

Phone 604-888-6366 Fax: 604-888-2791

Email: scsbc@twu.ca Website: www.scsbc.ca

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800-635-8288 or 616-957-1070 ext. 251 www.CSionline.org

SHEPHERD NEEDED:

God's flock of 99 active professing members at **Maranatha CRC in Calgary, Alberta** is in need of a Shepherd to guide us in living our lives for our Lord and King. The Shepherd we are seeking should be able to nurture the faith journey of all age levels. Effective preaching is very important to us but we also enjoy worshipping our Lord and Savior with our musical gifts and talents. Maranatha is an urban church located in a rapidly growing urban center of about 1 million souls nestled against the foothills of the Canadian Rockies in southern Alberta.

To find out more about us and obtain a church profile contact us at

Search Committee Maranatha CRC,
2111 - 52 St. N.W. Calgary,
Alberta, Canada T3B 1C3
or Don Vandertol 403-274-9879 Email: lotrednav@shaw.ca

Events/Advertising

Calendar of Events

Items Appearing in this column are run free of charge if they advertise an admission free event, if they accompany an ad for the same event, or at the discretion of CC. In case of free listing, space limitations apply. The charge otherwise is \$7.50 per line, or \$1.50 per 1/3 line, per insertion.

- Nov 1** Christian Festival Concert under the direction of Leendart Kooij in Roy Thomson Hall, Toronto \$28/\$21/\$16. Call 416-636-9779
- Nov 5** The Annual 2002 Church & the Law Seminar will be held on Tues., Nov. 5th, 2002 at Bramalea Baptist Church, Bramalea located in Greater Toronto. This year's theme is "Essential Legal Issues for Churches & Religious Charities". Registration forms are available at www.charitylaw.ca and the host, Carter & Associates, ph: (519) 942-0001, Fax: (519) 942-0300 or email: seminars@charitylaw.ca.
- Nov 8** Music to Delight: A program of music with soprano soloist Renée Stalenhoeft, organist Ian Sadler, the Harbours from Goderich, the Men of Note from Clinton, at Clinton CRC, 7:30 p.m. Tickets \$10, Children \$5. For information, call 519-482-5372.
- Nov 9** The Lighthouse Community Centre Annual International Dinner and Silent Auction, at Buffet King, 410 & Warden, Scarborough. Call The Lighthouse at 416-535-6262 for reservations.
- Nov 16** Concert of Sacred Music by St. Thomas Crescendo Male Choir - 7:30 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church, 60 Fifth St., Chatham. Also featuring Soloist Elisabeth Enzlin and Chatham-Kent Male Chorus. Sponsored by Chatham Christian Schools. Freewill offering. (519) 352-4980
- Nov 9** Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools (OACS) 50th Anniversary, Celebrating Pioneers and Visionaries, Oakville Conference Centre. Contact the OACS at 905-648-2100 or oacs@oacs.org to reserve your place.
- Nov 16** Liberation Choir, Fall tour. 8 p.m. Ebenezer Christian Ref. Church, Trenton See Ad.
- Nov 22** Mattianah Chr. Male Choir, Benefit Concert in Hebron CRC, Whitby, ON 8 p.m. See ad this issue.
- Nov 22** Songbook Workshop 7-10 pm Willowdale CRC, Toronto. For info: Laruens 41-221-7820 wdcrc@axxent.ca
- Nov 23** Songbook Workshop 9-12 noon. Mountainview CRC, Grimsby, Info: J. Hoytema 905-945-0004 or grimsbycrc@aol.com See ad for more details.
- Nov 23, 24** Smithers CRC 50th anniversary. Smithers, BC. For info: Aren Bakker at 250-847-2369 or Harry Krusselbrink at 250-847-3638. See ad this issue.
- Nov 30 - Dec 1** Tillsonburg CRC 25th Anniversary. For event info contact Marg Kriense Lokker 519-877-2519 or e-mail john.lokker@sympatico.ca
- Dec 7** Handel's Messiah performed by the Arcady Singers & Orchestra, 7:30 p.m. Willowdale CRC, 70 Hilda Av. Willowdale, ON Tickets \$15 & \$10. For info and tickets call Te Deum Music at 416-250-7702.
- Jan 17** Concert of Sacred Music by St. Thomas Crescendo Male Choir - 7:30 p.m. at First CRC, 181 Charlton Ave, Hamilton. Sponsored by World Wide Christian Schools. Freewill offering. (905) 765-5623
- Jan 18** Concert of Sacred Music by St. Thomas Crescendo Male Choir - 7:30 p.m. at Rehoboth Christian Reformed Church, 130 Scugog St., Bowmanville. Freewill offering (519) 637-4357

Job Opportunity

Huntley's Used Christian Books at 114 Lake St., St. Catharines, ON L2R 5X8. We buy and sell used Christian books. Open Tuesday - Saturday 10:00 - 5:00. 905-988-9223, e-mail: books@interpc.ca

P.V. & V. INSURANCE CENTRE

We are seeking a highly motivated, service and sales oriented person to further develop and lead our Life & Disability Insurance Division. You will be a Professional Life Insurance Broker and be able to identify sales opportunities. Your personal sense of commitment and responsibility as a leader will help in our plan development. You will have several years experience and have excellent sales skills. This is an exciting opportunity for a self-starter. Send your resume to:

Tony Vanderhout,
P.V. & V. Financial Centre
3050 Harvester Road,
Burlington, Ontario L7N 3J1

Fax (905) 632-4837

Email: tonyv@pvy-insurance.com

Sing!

A New Creation

Two workshops introducing this new song book and exploring the relationship between music & ministry - for pastors, elders, deacons, and musicians young and old.

Fri., Nov. 22, from 7:00-10:00 pm at Willowdale CRC, Toronto. Contact: Laruens Kaldeway: 416-221-7829; wdcrc@axxent.ca
Sat., Nov. 23, from 9-12noon at Mountainview CRC, Grimsby, Contact: Rev Jerry Hoytema, 905-945-0004; grimsbycrc@aol.com.

Leaders: Emily Brink, Norma deWaal Malefyt, Sandra Elgersma, Ron Rienstra, Kathy Smith, & student musicians from Calvin College.

Sponsored by the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship, along with Calvin Seminary, CRC Office of Social Justice, and Reformed Worship

The Liberation Choir

Proudly presents the

Fall Concert Tour

Under the direction of Willem Van Zuijdham
Accompanist: Ian Sadler
Soloist: Colleen Greidanus

Sat. Nov. 16, Ebenezer Christian Ref. Church
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Concerts start at 8 p.m. For information, call Grace at 905-457-2348. Tickets \$10.00 available at the door.

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Fax: 905-542-0154 e-mail: jklomps@istar.ca
Reg. # 1518992

Burlington,

Ontario

Maranatha Homes

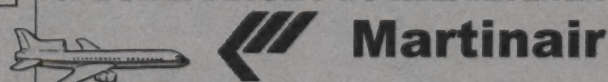
This award-winning Senior Citizen Homes is located close to Burlington Christian Reformed Church and Ebenezer Canadian Reformed Church, with audio hook-up for the Sunday services in every apartment from both churches and a weekly evening video church service presentation.
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Information from:

Rosanne van der Woerd, 3260 New Street
Burlington, ON L7N 3L4 905-639-9054

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News

Report suggests creative ways to market farming careers

Alan Doerksen

MISSISSAUGA, Ont. — A new report from Work Research Foundation (WRF) suggests creative ways the agriculture business could use to attract more people to work in that field. But a consultant to the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario (CFFO) suggests the report does not address some of the key problems facing agriculture.

The report explores how to deal with obstacles which keep young people from looking for work in agriculture. It offers suggestions on how to revitalize the image of agriculture, and strategies to recruit farm workers.

Looking at the image factor, the report asserts, "The industry is more sophisticated, more business-oriented. It's not the hay-chewing, pitchfork-bearing farmer." It suggests, "As the 'high tech' sector has more appeal, agriculture does not appear to be as innovative. People feel disconnected with agriculture. Agriculture is frequently portrayed negatively by the media, and the pay in the industry does not reflect the long hours and hard work required. Much work needs to be done in this area."

The report, titled "Agricultural Sector Human Resource Recruitment Initiative: Current and Potential Strategies," was researched and written by Deani Van Pelt for WRF, and submitted to the Ontario Agricultural Human Resource Council (OAHRC) earlier this year. Van Pelt consulted many agriculture-related agencies in



Deani Van Pelt

Ontario and across North America to sound them out for insights on how to improve and effectively market agriculture as a career.

Barriers to farm work

It identifies several barriers that keep people from participating in agriculture. One is a demographic dilemma: the average age of farmers is increasing, and there are fewer workers to replace retiring ones.

There is also aggressive competition from other areas of work. And for people who have worked on farms before and have left, there tends to be a hesitancy to return to such work because, suggests the report, going back into such work requires "a considerable amount of time, effort, capital and anxiety."

There is also much ignorance about agriculture.

To deal with such "dissatisfiers," the report recommends that agricultural employers arrange better compensation plans for their

workers, better working conditions, and job security. Besides this, they "must provide opportunities for additional satisfaction for the employees. This includes recognition, unique rewards, opportunities for input and advancement, excitement, challenge, fun and flexibility."

Satisfiers

In farming work, there are some inherent "satisfiers" which can attract people, the report says. They include:

- small town, rural advantages,
- opportunity to nurture living plants and/or animals,
- a variety of indoor and outdoor work.

The report suggests a three-stage model to effectively recruit young people into farming work. It should be **collaborative, intentional and experiential** — such as immersion-type programs which would provide young people with experience and exposure to agriculture and its participants. Collaboration should be between government and private farming agencies, colleges and universities. Recruitment should aggressively target young people, especially those already connected with groups such as 4-H and Junior Farmers.

The report gives examples of programs in other provinces which do an effective job of marketing agriculture as a career. For instance, the B.C. Agricultural Labour Pool has "a very active website" and is "outstanding" at promoting farming, says Van Pelt, in an interview with *Christian Courier*.

Other provinces have good programs to promote farming, which could be used elsewhere in Canada. P.E.I.'s school system offers an Agriculture Certificate Program, which was developed in response to industry needs. "In Ontario, that model should definitely be looked at," asserts Van Pelt. "It doesn't take serious dollars."

'This is a Pig'

Another effective program is "This is a Pig" — a website and program used by government agencies in Manitoba and Alberta to encourage youth to work in the swine industry.

"The best kids should be going into agriculture, as into other industries," asserts Van Pelt. Agriculture is "an incredibly satisfying place to devote your talents." She points out that more than 50 per cent of young people who are raised on a farm go into farming.

Besides reasons mentioned in the report, Van Pelt explains that

agriculture can be satisfying because "small-town Ontario is having more appeal — cheaper places to raise families." The entire farming lifestyle can be satisfying, she adds.

Van Pelt believes agriculture needs to improve its image. "It doesn't have anything to hide," but it needs to celebrate its positive aspects.

She favors a collaborative approach to promoting farming, which needs "a coherent, cohesive message" and a shared, collective vision.

"A career in agriculture is more than what most people think. Many exciting opportunities for a rewarding career are available to today's youth, but it is up to the industry to make these opportunities known and provide the means for following a career path down on the farm," Van Pelt wrote in a recent WRF *Comment* magazine.

Recruiting farmers is tough

Dr. Charlotte McCallum, a professional researcher and consultant to the CFFO, is somewhat critical of the report. "They are making the false premise that farm laborers are equivalent to farmers. That's wrong," she asserts. "A lot of farm labor in Ontario is labor from the Caribbean and Central America.... There's quite a big divide between farm labor and farming." Such workers don't have the right to strike, for one thing. Last year, the Supreme Court of Canada called on Ontario "to clean up its act" regarding how it treats farm laborers, says McCallum. But the report does not mention farm laborers coming from other countries to Canada. The report misses the point, she says, by not mentioning important issues such as farm safety for laborers, and organizing unions for them.

McCallum is not sure if the ideas about recruiting farm labor would work. "Trying to recruit people to farm is really tough." For one thing, she says, "it's extremely difficult" to buy and start a farm now. "To start a farm, we're talking a million dollars.... People inherit farms from their parents. This is really the major way farmers get started."

Besides that, farming is "a closed culture" which is hard to break into, says McCallum. It's a distinct industry compared with other businesses. "It's really a separate realm from the rest of the economy." But there are many opportunities in farming, and marketing the farming profession is important, she agrees.

News Digest

Bible belt buckles

JACKSON, Mississippi — Who but a resident of the Bible Belt — in the southern U.S. — would come up with an idea to market a Bible Belt buckle? Put another notch on the resume of promoter Malcolm White, who came up with the idea after driving past a billboard with a picture of an open Bible on it. Although he had passed the sign many times, he says one day he looked at it and thought "that looks like a belt buckle," reports the *Clarion-Ledger*.

White got a brainwave, and scribbled down his idea. Later on, he got the Bible Belt buckle designed, registered for a trademark, and set up a website to sell it (www.biblebelts.net).

"Everybody knows the Bible belt," says White. "They detest it, they find it heartwarming or comical, but everybody knows it.... A lot of people will be interested in [the belt buckle] out of pride and celebration of the greatest book ever written."

Degree in surfing

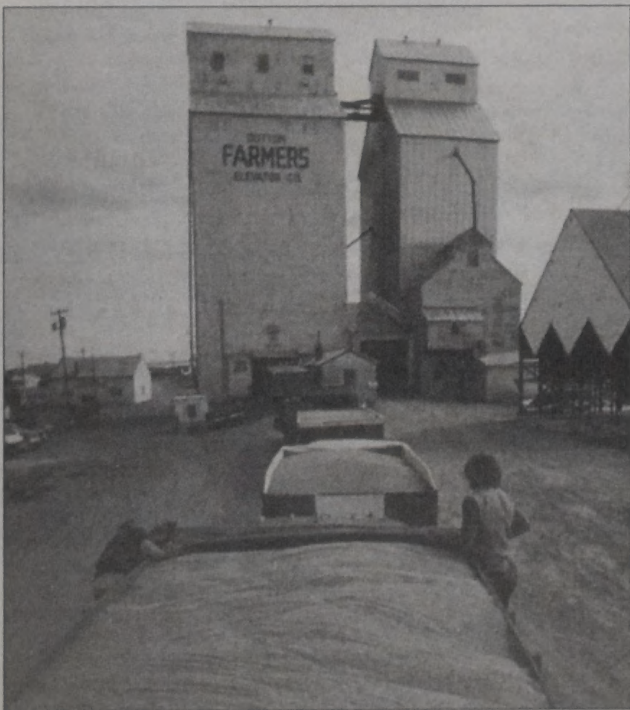
TWEED HEADS, Australia (Ananova) — An Australian university is offering a degree and diploma in surfing. The one-year course is being held at Southern Cross University, where academics insist there will be no place for surf bums and slackers. Apart from being taught to surf, students will also learn about surf-event management, marketing and public relations.

The *South China Morning Post* reports two courses are on offer from the newly established International College of Surfing Education and Research. They are a diploma of sport management (surfing studies) and an associate degree of sport management (surfing studies).

Dr. James Skinner, who has drawn up the courses in collaboration with Surfing Australia, the sport's governing body, told the paper he believes surfing is worth about \$4.4 billion to the global economy. The courses are intended to train the next generation of promoters, event managers and coaches for Australia's booming surfing industry.

Census out of this world

MOSCOW — Space, the final frontier, is not beyond the reach of the Russian census-taker. A Russian spaceship recently flew to two cosmonauts, carrying census forms, so that they can take part in Russia's first post-Soviet population headcount, the Russian national space agency told Reuters.



NICHOLAS DEVORE III, BRUCE COLEMAN INC.

Farmers bring a truckload of wheat to a grain elevator.